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SAN RAMON VALLEY
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San Ramon Valley (Calif.) Area General Plan, 1977.

[Lacks general plan maps.]

[Amended through 1982.]

BT

San Ramon Valley Area General Plan. 1977

A Draft Proposal was prepared by the
San Ramon Valley General Plan Citizen's Committee
with the assistance of the
Contra Costa County Planning Department
in March 1976
which was approved by the
Contra Costa County Planning Commission
On October 12, 1976
and which was further approved by the
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
on May 24, 1977

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**San Ramon Valley
General Plan
Citizen's Committee**

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Introduction

The San Ramon Valley Area has long been considered one of the most desirable living areas in Contra Costa County and the Bay Area because of its great scenic beauty, good climate, the suburban charm of the neighborhoods, and its proximity to the major employment centers of Oakland and San Francisco. Since the 1950's the character of the valley has changed from a rural area with walnut groves and ranches to its present character of large suburban lots intermixed with walnut grove remnants and pasture. A rural feeling is substantially retained by the open and natural character of the highly visible hills, and by the rural tree-lined roads lacking curbs, sidewalks, and street lights. It is this "rural view of life" and its implication of low density land uses over major portions of the Planning Area, including a semi-rural neighborhood design and long views to open space, which is essential in preserving the area's present aesthetic qualities.

As lovely and desirable as San Ramon Valley is for living and rearing a family, there are concerns which have become apparent in recent years, most of which are related to the increasing rate of development. This, in itself, is a consequence of the attractiveness of the area and its accessibility to freeways and regional employment centers. Orderly and appropriate growth in the future requires the provision of adequate facilities and services for new development as well as maintenance of a satisfactory level of facilities and services to all residents. Avoiding the overtaxing of facilities is as important as retaining qualities of quiet beauty in planning for a future community which is efficient and liveable.

This plan revises, combines and amends the existing General Plans for the area, which include the 1963 Land Use Element, 1973 Open Space and Conservation Plan, as well as the 1967 Alamo-Danville and the 1971 San Ramon plans which are parts of the County General Plan. Since those plans were adopted a number of changes have occurred, including State requirements for new General Plan elements, the formation of new regional agencies, revisions of federal and state laws and plans, economic changes, and new trends in residential project proposals. As a result of all these factors, new responsibilities for General Plans exist.

The broad purposes of this General Plan revision are:

- ☐ To update and bring together all the various land use elements of the General Plans for the area.
- ☐ To integrate the special purpose elements into one comprehensive General Plan document.
- ☐ To integrate zoning and General Plan land use categories.
- ☐ To relate development proposals to necessary community facilities.
- ☐ To consider the proposals of regional and state agencies in County government decisions, such as the plans of the East Bay Regional Park District and the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

- To analyze trends in residential development and make recommendations for controls on land development.

While recognizing the validity of the goals of previous General Plans for the Valley, this revision provides further detail necessary to insure compliance with General Plan provisions in day-to-day decision making. It should be noted that the projects previously approved were considered as a "given" in the preparation of this Plan.

The General Plan revision delineates an approach to growth, development, facilities and other community needs which will enable the Planning Area to develop properly with adequate public services while retaining the natural beauty of the region for the Plan period of fifteen years, to 1990. The Plan consists of maps and text. The maps are useful for orientation and generalized land use statements, but the Plan text must be used for policy guidelines and to understand the concepts relating to suitable types and densities of development, provision of facilities, safety from hazards and environmental protection. Due to the scale of the plan, the lines designating the various land uses on the plan map are general and not precise.

This Plan is part of the County General Plan and is set in the framework of the policies of the countywide General Plan elements, but it concentrates on the special concerns of the Greater San Ramon Valley area which differentiates it from the County generally. Thus, the plan modifies the County General Plan, but is not separate from it. Findings and policies for the subjects discussed in this document are further explored in the General Plan elements for the County. In the event of inconsistencies between this plan and other elements of the County General Plan this latest adoption shall govern as required by State law. Within this plan, the more specific should control over the more general. The Plan should be construed as a whole—the policies, principles and purposes set forth in the text should not be taken out of context.

The Regional Context The Planning Area, covering approximately 112 square miles, is an integral part of the county. The Planning Area is somewhat separated physically from the rest of the county, being connected to the central county through one narrow entrance to the north. It opens into the Amador basin to the south in Alameda County. The General Plan reflects coordination with plans and programs for transportation, roads, open space, and urban development within Contra Costa County, with the adjacent City of Walnut Creek, and with the Dublin area to the south. Additionally, the plans and program of special purpose agencies and districts are reflected in the plan, including the State Department of Parks and Recreation, the East Bay Regional Park District, water and sewer service areas, County Service Areas for recreation and open space, and the County Agricultural Preserve program.

The Valley Today From its heritage as a Spanish and pioneer ranching region, the San Ramon Valley Area has become a mix of suburban living in and near the central valley with agriculture in the outlying hills and valleys. The predominant development pattern today is one of single family homes on large lots interspersed with orchard remnants and pasture. It is this character which the community desires to retain.

The north-south alignment of Interstate 680 through the central valley corridor facilitates convenient commuting access to major employment centers in Hayward,

Map 1
Location



Oakland, and San Francisco. While the freeway is an excellent connector of the valley to outside areas, it also hampers the flow of cross traffic, dividing the east from the west and causing congestion problems near concentrated cross-traffic points. Business districts are oriented around freeway access points in Alamo, Danville, and San Ramon.

The area is developed predominately in low density single family residences. Residents tend to have higher incomes and more education than the county median, and include a relatively large number of business and professional persons. Family size is larger than the county average.

Development patterns in the Planning Area reflect its topography. At the north, rugged Las Trampas Ridge and the Diablo Range foothills separate the Planning Area from central county cities. The valley opens into the Livermore-Amador basin on the south, and to small narrow east-west trending valleys in the eastern foothills. Development has taken place along the central valley and side valleys in the northern Planning Area, and is now continuing southward in the central valley and farther out in the eastern side valleys. Las Trampas Ridge, Mt. Diablo, the highly visible Diablo foothills of the Black Hills, Short Ridge, Sherburne Hills and the Dougherty Hills, and the Wiedemann and Harlan Hill area, are quite steep thus directing development along the valley floors and the lower, more gentle slopes.

The future of the Planning Area for the period of this Plan is largely set by existing and approved project areas. Development can take place in the additional land areas assigned to residential and other urban uses without destroying the suburban and rural charm which is highly valued by the residents. Nevertheless, the community is facing situations which often occur when growth is rapid, as it has been here for over a decade, and where the settlement pattern is primarily one of low density housing. When the capacities of roads, schools, utilities or other facilities are exceeded, the systems must be improved or expanded. New and innovative means of providing services and facilities may be required to provide a satisfactory level of services and facilities to the entire community. This Plan explores some possible means of achieving the objective of satisfactory facilities and services. The methods selected in each case should not be pre-determined, but should reflect conditions at the time projects are needed.

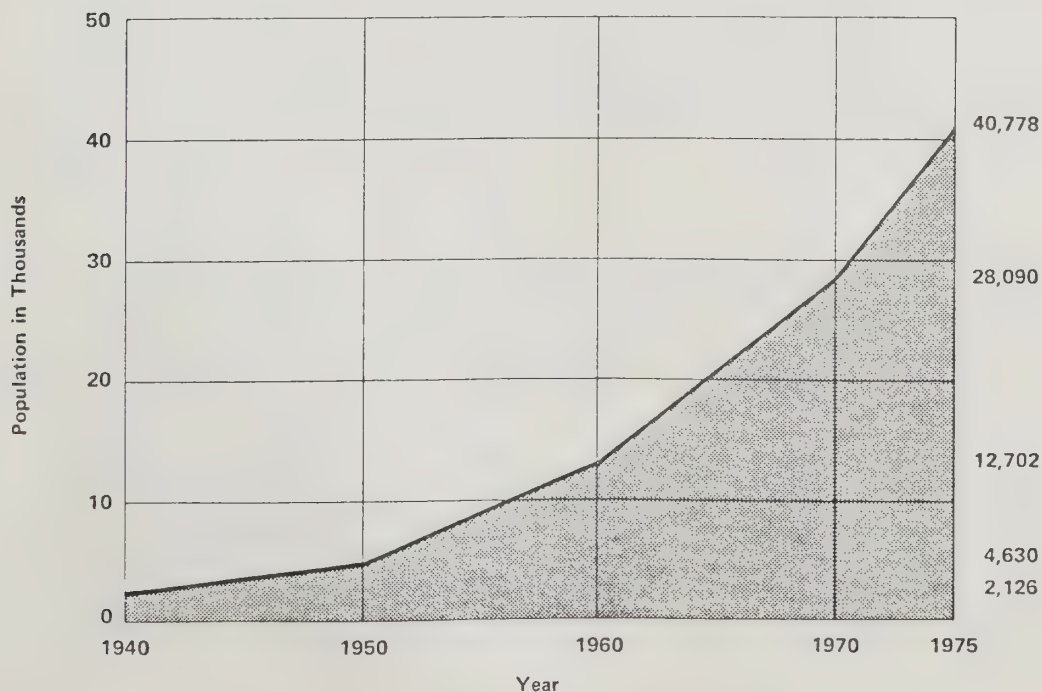
Background For Planning

Six reports were prepared to provide background information as a foundation for this Plan. Reports were prepared on population characteristics, economics, land use and zoning, transportation, community facilities, and physical resources; the population report also includes material from the 1975 Countywide Census. The following brief summaries from the background reports indicate the conditions and factors which guided the preparation of this Plan.

Population Characteristics In the 1940's the San Ramon Valley area began a period of rapid growth. From a population of 2,120 in 1940 it more than doubled in population to 4,630 in 1950. This marked the beginning of suburban expansion into the Valley. During the 1950's the population tripled to 12,700 and nearly five square miles had been developed for residential use. During this period the first freeway project to affect the valley was completed; the Walnut Creek interchange and Interstate 680 south to Rudgear Road. During the 1960's the population doubled again, and it reached 28,090 in 1970. Residential land increased to more than 5,000 acres, or about eight square miles. By 1967 all segments of Interstate 680 were opened and freeway access was available to the entire Planning Area. By 1970 the town of Danville had grown to a thriving community business center employing more than 2,000 persons. From 1970 to the present, growth has continued to be rapid; the 1975 population of the Planning Area was approximately 41,000 persons.

A significant amount of additional development has been approved for the valley. If all of these approved projects proceed they will provide for continued rapid growth dur-

San Ramon Valley Population Growth 1940-1975



ing the period of this Plan, so that the population of the Valley could approach 80,000 persons by 1990. A number of variables can affect this assumption of maximum growth, including general economic prosperity, family size, and countywide development policies. If development is planned for a growth rate slower than the maximum provided in the Plan, and/or if families tend to become smaller, the 1990 population may be less than 80,000. Since the area presently attracts commuters, the overall amount of growth and the types of neighborhoods which are proposed may depend on as yet unknown constraints related to air quality or fuel consumption. In any case, the Plan provides adequate land for projected growth to, and probably beyond, 1990.

Economics and Development In 1970 approximately 6,000 jobs existed in the Planning Area for a population of over 28,000. In 1974, approximately 8,000 jobs were available in the Planning Area for a population of 36,600. These jobs were filled by both commuters and local residents. A strong commuter pattern is evident in the Planning Area. Clean industry and major regional offices can be encouraged in appropriate locations in order to broaden employment opportunities for managerial and technical people in the area and to provide a more balanced tax base.

The development pattern in the Planning Area makes it costly to provide services as compared with a more densely settled and compact type of community. Rapid growth itself makes it difficult for any community to provide capital investment in public facilities without heavy tax burdens on the existing residents. Property tax revenues to the County and to the districts and agencies which provide facilities in the Planning Area have risen sharply in recent years as a result of re-assessment, but the cost of providing facilities and services has risen at least as fast, and in some instances has risen more than revenues.

Land Use and Zoning The 1970 land use inventory for the County indicated over 5,000 acres in residential uses in the Planning Area with 12,650 dwelling units, 700 acres in business and public uses, and over 65,000 acres in open space uses, primarily agriculture. By 1974 residential development had occupied an additional 2,000 acres for a total of approximately 7,000 acres. Minor subdivision activity (lot splits) is occurring on the periphery of Alamo and Danville, along Crow Canyon Road, and in the eastern Planning Area particularly along Lawrence Road and Finley Road. In rural areas parcel split activity indicates a conversion trend from agricultural to residential.

State law requires local zoning ordinances and development projects to be consistent with the General Plan. Ordinarily the General Plan land use designation defines the maximum development potential in any area, to be modified by environmental constraints, circulation and facilities needs, and ancillary uses such as churches, recreation facilities, and other uses which are permitted under the conforming zoning.

Transportation Roads in the Planning Area are provided by the State (Interstate 680 and a portion of Mt. Diablo Scenic Highway) and the County. According to the "County Public Works Department Road Deficiency Study, 1968," several of the major roads in the Planning Area are deficient in structure, alignment, capacity, and/or drainage. There are also congestion points, including downtown Danville. Because of rapid increases in traffic in the years since 1968, an update of this study

would find additional road segments used beyond their capacity as defined by Public Works Department criteria. Correcting these deficiencies may be the responsibility of the County, an assessment district, land developers, or may be achieved by other means deemed appropriate at the time improvements take place.

Limited public transportation service includes the Sierra Lines commuter bus to the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory in Livermore, and a BART feeder from Interstate 580 in Dublin to the Walnut Creek station.

Community Facilities Although the Planning Area is served by four school districts, virtually all students are in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, which in 1975 operated eleven elementary schools, two intermediate schools and four high schools. Two major private schools are also located in the Planning Area. No college campuses exist in the valley, but it is served by the Contra Costa Community College District's Diablo Valley campus located in Pleasant Hill.

Other community services include a library which is part of the Contra Costa County Library system, fire protection provided by eight stations in four fire districts, and police services by the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department and the California Highway Patrol. Private security patrols are maintained in several areas. The nearest hospitals are located in Walnut Creek to the north and Livermore to the south.

Outdoor recreation within and near the Planning Area is provided by the State, East Bay Regional Park District, local districts, school districts, private clubs, and homeowners associations. Mt. Diablo State Park and Las Trampas Regional Parks provide informal outdoor recreation opportunities, but there is a need for local recreation facilities which will be ameliorated by the projects of the Valley Community Services District in the San Ramon area and by County Recreation Service Area R-7 in the Alamo-Danville area.

Sewer services are generally located in the central Valley. Some service has been extended east of the Diablo Country Club and further easterly extensions will be required for the Blackhawk Ranch development. Residents of the Planning Area receive their water from the East Bay Municipal Utility District except for smaller outlying neighborhoods, individual homes on wells, and ranches. Water service areas generally follow the same boundaries as sewer service areas. Refuse disposal and electricity are available throughout the Planning Area.

The following list of agencies which service the Planning Area is not complete, but does give an idea of the many services required to sustain the community.

Private Utilities and Services

1. Diablo Disposal Service Company
2. Dublin Disposal Service Company
3. Pacific Gas and Electric Company
4. Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company
5. Valley Disposal Service Company

Public Agencies

1. Acalanes Union High School District
2. Amador Valley Joint Union School District
3. Central Contra Costa Sanitary District
4. Contra Costa Community College District
5. Contra Costa County Consolidated Fire Protection District
6. Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
7. Danville Fire Protection District
8. Diablo Community Services District
9. East Bay Municipal Utility District
10. East Bay Regional Park District
11. Green Valley Recreation and Park District
12. Livermore Valley School District
13. County Recreation Service Area, R-5 (South Danville)
14. County Recreation Service Area, R-7 (San Ramon Valley)
15. Bay Area Air Pollution Control District
16. San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
17. San Ramon Fire Protection District
18. San Ramon Valley Unified School District
19. County Police Service Area, P-2 (Danville-Alamo)
20. County Police Service Area, P-5 (Roundhill)
21. State Department of Parks and Recreation
22. Tassajara Fire Protection District
23. Valley Community Services District
24. Walnut Creek School District

Physical Resources The pleasant climate, with mild winters and warm, dry summers, attracts people to the Planning Area. The natural beauty of the hills which frame the view and contribute to a rural feeling is also a great attraction. The environment contributes a few problems along with many benefits, however—problems characteristic of similar areas throughout the region. These include the natural hazards of landslides, earthquakes, and wildfire, and a tendency to concentrate air pollutants in the valleys, particularly during the sunny days of summer and fall.

Much of the scenic beauty of the Planning Area is attributable to natural vegetation and topography. Stands of oak and bay along streams and roads, oak woodlands and the free-standing old oaks set in grasslands, individual specimens of mature walnut and oak remaining in commercial and residential areas, and the “mosiac” of grass-chaparral woodlands characteristic of the Las Trampas region, contrast with miles of rolling grasslands to the east to create a landscape equal to any in the Bay Area. Mt. Diablo State Park provides a refuge for rare and endangered plants, including the Mt. Diablo manzanita, the Mt. Diablo jewel flower, and the Diablo helianthella. Abundant wildlife can be observed in the Planning Area. Mt. Diablo State Park and Las Trampas Regional Park are safe havens for large deer populations, the Golden Eagle, and many

other birds and animals. Las Trampas Ridge, Rocky Ridge, and the Diablo Range provide habitat areas for the rare Alameda striped racer. Creeks and their riparian vegetation are particularly important in maintaining wildlife populations throughout the Planning Area because they provide water and shelter as well as abundant insects and seeds to sustain life.

Goals and Objectives

Residents of the Planning Area recognize a community of interest in retaining values presently perceived and in requiring future growth to reinforce and harmonize with these values.

The basic goals of the General Plan are:

- ☐ To reinforce the rural view of life as perceived by area residents.
- ☐ To couple continued growth in the Planning Area with the ability to provide the facilities necessary to maintain quality of service.
- ☐ To protect the livability and usefulness of existing development.
- ☐ To achieve harmony between the area's development and its physical setting.

From these generalized ideals, the following goals and objectives are derived for each of the several elements of the General Plan.

Each goal reflects the broad goals for the Planning Area as related to the subject matter of a Plan element. The objectives are means of achieving the goals by various kinds of decisions over a time period. These goals and objectives are not absolutes but are ideals which may not be met in every case and their practicability may vary throughout the Planning Area.

Land Use • Urban Growth

GOAL To provide for a balance in land uses with a development configuration which promotes a distinctive identification and character for each community based on existing community images.

OBJECTIVES Encourage the emergence of a suburban pattern in the Planning Area which promotes the individuality and unique character of each community.

Discourage premature or "skip" development which can constitute an undue economic burden on the general public, require extension of facilities, and result in growth pressures in inappropriate areas.

Foster a rate of growth which is coordinated with available community facilities and public works, and which is compatible with the ability to provide essential services and facilities such as schools, roads, and flood control works.

Protect agriculture for a balance in land use, to meet the long-range needs of the County and for resource conservation.

Encourage urban expansion in areas where it will minimize conflicts with the agricultural economy.

Apply appropriate land use controls in potentially hazardous areas, such as on active earthquake fault traces, in order to reduce risks to life and property and to minimize public costs for emergency remedial actions which may be required.

Recognize the implications of suburban growth in the regional setting.

Insure that the cost of providing adequate levels of required public facilities and services to newly developing areas will not become an unreasonable burden to existing property owners.

Land Use • Residential

GOAL To preserve and enhance existing residential areas and provide new residential areas which will complement existing patterns of development.

OBJECTIVES Develop the character of the Planning Area as one of predominantly single family residences, and provide multiple residential units in suitable densities and locations. Offer a range of densities in order to provide for a variety of family sizes, income levels, and age groups.

Protect existing residential areas from intrusions of incompatible land uses and disruptive traffic.

Utilize techniques of land development that protect or enhance the natural landscape.

Decrease development densities on steeper slopes.

Provide the highest residential densities near the existing centers of Alamo, Danville and San Ramon.

Land Use • Commercial and Office

GOAL To provide for commercial districts of appropriate size and location to serve the existing and anticipated future population of the Planning Area, including adequate circulation and transportation facilities, and to encourage the development of administrative offices to expand employment opportunities.

OBJECTIVES Encourage commercial development for neighborhood and community services and sales businesses. Major regional-scale shopping centers are not considered appropriate.

Establish the limits of business areas, where practical, by the use of boundaries set by creeks, major roads, significant changes in topography, and other physical features in order to avoid conflicts between commercial and nearby residential uses.

Improve existing business areas to create better pedestrian circulation, bicycle paths and adequate parking.

Prevent strip commercial development.

Establish design criteria for new and redeveloping commercial areas which will lead to more attractive business areas in order to enhance property values, attract shoppers, and encourage a village-like atmosphere.

Approve small convenience centers in residential land use areas where they would reduce travel time and traffic congestion, and if they can be visually integrated into the areas.

Encourage large regional offices in designated areas to enhance local employment.

Land Use • Industrial

GOAL To provide for the continuing orderly development of research facilities, regional offices, and light industrial uses in order to improve the economic base and provide local employment.

OBJECTIVES Concentrate industrial development in select areas adjacent to existing major transportation corridors and interchanges.

Design employment centers and industrial areas to be harmonious with adjacent development.

Encourage types of industry which employ the skills represented by residents.

Open Space and Conservation of Resources

GOAL To preserve open space for agriculture, recreation, public safety, the maintenance of native vegetation, wildlife, and visual quality.

OBJECTIVES Recognize the importance of retaining agriculture in the Planning Area and devise policies to protect agriculture from urban encroachment.

Protect significant hilltops and ridges and their visual quality.

Prevent erosion and landslides by appropriate use of engineering techniques, by revegetation and by avoiding development in particularly vulnerable areas.

Maintain the natural appearance of hillsides and ridges to the greatest practical extent.

Require drainage improvements which will enhance the natural appearance of streams and minimize the man-made characteristics of flood control projects in so far as it is practical and reasonable.

Protect natural tree cover and vegetation to ensure the preservation of the watershed and the natural beauty of the area. Significant trees should be preserved where possible.

Design development in flood-prone areas to minimize the risk of flood damage in order to protect property and reduce long-term insurance costs.

Require drainage and flood control rights-of-way to be dedicated for public purposes where the stream is designated in the General Plan for trail use.

Maintain the highest levels of air quality which can reasonably be obtained.

Require individual homes in outlying areas surrounded by unirrigated vegetation to incorporate fire safety features.

Promote policies to protect the rare and endangered plant and animal species of the region.

Circulation

GOAL To provide a multi-model transportation system which will serve local and through traffic with a minimum of congestion and maximum safety and which will provide adequate access to new development with a minimum of conflict with residential neighborhoods, shopping areas, agriculture and other land uses.

OBJECTIVES Route new arterials around rather than through existing neighborhoods.

Coordinate proposed roads with existing and planned roads of adjoining areas and the State.

Develop roads in hill areas to conform with topography and to minimize disturbances to the slopes and natural features of the land.

Reduce dependence on the automobile by construction of a system of bicycle paths and hiking trails to connect community facilities, residential areas, and business districts, as well as to points of interest outside the community.

Encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation, especially transit, to help minimize automobile congestion and air pollution.

Maintain the visual quality of scenic routes.

Allow development in outlying areas only when necessary transportation facilities are in place or committed to be developed.

Prevent the encroachment of unsuitable uses on the railroad right-of-way and encourage the use of this right-of-way for trails where feasible.

Community Facilities

GOAL To obtain maximum benefit from existing public facilities and to provide a high quality of public services and cultural and recreational facilities for all residents.

OBJECTIVES Develop easily accessible civic, cultural, and recreational facilities of a size to serve present and expected future demands.

Promote the development of a system of large and small outdoor recreation areas conveniently located to meet the needs of all segments of the present and future population.

Utilize existing and future public facilities, such as schools, for neighborhood recreation as much as possible.

Utilize publicly owned lands for recreation to the fullest practical extent.

Link local recreation areas to major regional and state parks by trails.

Preserve areas and buildings of historical significance.

Maintain and upgrade existing public utility, fire, police and all other public services as needed to adequately protect and serve existing and new developments.

Carefully assess the approval of developments in the light of the demands they may place on existing community facilities.

Community Design

GOAL To ensure that communities are visually and functionally compatible with the physical character and desired images of the Planning Area.

OBJECTIVES Approve buildings in commercial areas which are designed for a low profile appearance and which will contribute to a village-like atmosphere.

Preserve the visual qualities of the Planning Area by restricting development on significant scenic ridges, and by preserving significant stands of trees.

Improve the appearance of the community by the elimination of negative elements such as non-conforming signs and overhead utility lines, and by encouraging aesthetically designed screening with adequate setbacks and landscaping.

Design public improvements to avoid removing mature trees or other scenic features insofar as it is practical and reasonable.

Protect the visual qualities of designated scenic routes by reviewing projects with respect to their visual impact on the public.

The General Plan Elements

State law requires local governments to prepare and adopt General Plan elements for land use, housing, circulation, scenic routes, open space, conservation, public safety, seismic safety, and noise. All of these are included in this Plan to the extent that local issues are presented. Optional General Plan elements include recreation, trails, and community facilities and are also included in this revision. Findings and policies regarding problems of countywide distribution are found in the respective County General Plan elements. An additional section on community design is included, because several design concerns are evident and because of the aesthetic sensitivity of the residents. Taken together, the General Plan elements provide for future residential, commercial and industrial development of a suitable type and density, and designate areas where expansion of roads and other community facilities will be required to serve the future population. The elements also delineate areas which should not be developed during the effective period of the Plan, and identify special features, such as significant scenic ridges, which will remain essentially in a natural state in order to preserve visual quality. Since future growth will require new roads, road widening, flood control works, and other costly public projects, it is particularly important in the Planning Area to coordinate suburban expansion with essential public investment without causing undue increases in property taxes. In these changing times it becomes difficult to predict the future with a considerable degree of confidence. Therefore, observed changes in the trends assumed in the Plan will lead to review and possible revision of one or more of the Plan elements.

State law requires that zoning and subdivisions be consistent with the General Plan. The Interpretive Policies on General Plan-Development Ordinance Conformance, adopted by the Contra Costa County Planning Commission in January, 1974, serve as a supplemental reference for determining zoning consistency.

This Plan provides considerable acreages of land for the continuing development of the Planning Area. If built out at the mid-range of the densities specified for each residential use category, it would result in more than doubling the 1975 population by 1990, for a total of over 80,000 persons. Some public facilities are presently strained to capacity because of past growth rates. If this build-out rate of areas designated for development continues, a result could be that neither the community nor the County would be able to provide facilities as rapidly as required to service that growth. Therefore, the Plan encourages mechanisms which relate allowable additional development to the provision of facilities and services. By these means new residents will be assured of satisfactory levels of services without unduly burdening Planning Area residents or the County.

This Plan provides for balanced growth in that it includes appropriate areas for commercial, office, and industrial expansion. The development of these areas will improve the tax base and reduce the tax burden on residents. It will also provide local jobs for technical and managerial people, thus minimizing the dominant commuter pattern. The Plan will strengthen the Planning Area economy, provide for continued development, protect environmental resources, and preserve scenic beauty:

A General Plan consists of maps and text. The Plan Map, found at the back of this document, delineates the location and extent of various land uses. The map alone cannot give the level of detail required in General Plans. Special considerations are discussed in the text pertaining to each element.

Land Use Element This section includes a description of the land use proposals shown on the Plan Map. Considerations for providing facilities, avoiding hazards, and other refinements of this basic element are found in the appropriate following sections. The five basic land use types; residential, commercial, industrial, public, and open space, are described by limitations such as extent of land area, densities, and general restrictions designed to avoid inappropriate or conflicting uses. These limitations also determine the extent of needed facilities and services.

Residential Uses The housing stock in the Planning Area consists mainly of higher priced owner-occupied single family homes. This trend is expected to continue, as reflected in the large land areas assigned to single family residential uses. Multiple family housing units, including townhouses and apartments, are not as large a proportion of the available housing in the Planning Area as in other parts of the County and the Bay Area, yet these types of housing are attractive to retired persons, young marrieds, and single parents. The housing trend in the Planning Area is expected to remain the same as in the past, with a predominance of higher-priced, owner-occupied, single family homes. In keeping with the general residential character of the area, the preservation and enhancement of existing single family residential areas is of paramount importance. New residential areas should be compatible with and complement the existing pattern of residential neighborhoods.

Residential areas, identified by the density of dwelling units considered appropriate, range from Country Estate to Multiple Family Medium Density. Within each density category variations in land use density and intensity do not exceed the density range authorized by this plan. Within the above, in areas designated for single family use, the Planned Unit Development concept may be utilized, which allows clustered housing and a limited number of attached housing units where appropriate.

A present land use concern is the encroachment of non-residential but permitted uses along San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Hartz Avenue and Danville Boulevard. This Plan calls for residential neighborhoods to be developed along these roads and discourages legally permissible non-residential uses, to protect the scenic quality of these roads and the desirability of nearby residential uses.

Another area which warrants special discussion is the southeast corner of Sycamore Valley Boulevard and Camino Ramon. The Plan designated this area as Low Density-Single Family Residential, but recognizes that uses other than single family residences, allowed through the land use permit process, will most probably be the future uses of this area.

Single Family Residential There are four single family residential categories designated in this Plan. These four designations should provide for a range of suburban densities and lead toward a diversification of the housing stock in the San Ramon Planning Area.

Country Estate. Minimum lot size 1 acre. Country Estate areas are located in topographically difficult areas and in outlying areas where a large compact population is not appropriate. As the name and minimum lot size imply, the character of these areas is to be rural. Keeping livestock for pleasure is appropriate in these areas. Lots larger than one acre are desirable and may be required on slopes over 15%, where hazardous conditions are found, or for other reasonable purposes. Existing residential zoning categories of R-40 or larger parcel size are compatible with the Country Estate designation.

Low Density Single Family Residential. 1 to 3 units per net acre. A major portion of the land designated for residential uses in the Planning Area is assigned to this category. The allowable range of one to three units per net acre provides flexibility in planning projects to reflect topography, proximity to existing development, and the capacities of facilities. It is intended that the lower densities occur on steeper land and in outlying areas and that greater densities occur on level land close to commercial districts and major arterials. Densities calculated for Planned Unit Developments will reflect these variations, so that the areas as a whole will be built out at about two units per net acre. Clustering will be considered to some extent, but will normally consist of clustered detached homes. Attached units are acceptable where they can be made visually compatible with the large lot-single family home character of the area. It should be noted that both the Alamo and Diablo communities have special characteristics which preclude this clustering in established areas.

The Interchange Transitional Zoning District, G-1, conforms with this General Plan category.

Two Low Density Single Family Residential areas, Sycamore Valley and the lower Dougherty Hills area, have been identified as requiring special care in development. They are described separately in this element as Special Concern Areas 1 and 2.

Medium Density Single Family Residential. 3 to 5 units per net acre. The Medium Density Single Family Residential designation allows for flexibility in project design with a permissible range of 3 to 5 units per net acre. Development in these areas should be encouraged at an overall mid-range average of four units per net acre. This density provides a large lot for family living with room for gardens and pets, and is expected to lead to neighborhoods which are attractive to suburban families. Medium density areas are located reasonable close to shopping, arterials, commuter routes, and facilities, so the greater traffic generated from these more intensively developed areas will not severely impact traffic on rural roads in outlying areas.

High Density Single Family Residential. 4 to 7 units per net acre. High Density Single Family Residential areas are located on level and gently rolling land in San Ramon, and reflect the more intense development of adjacent Dublin in Alameda County and convenient commuter access to freeways. As is true of the other single family detached areas, housing in these areas will conform with the single family character of existing neighborhoods.

Multi-Family Residential Multi-family areas are a type of residential use considered as an appropriate transition from commercial and office areas to single family

neighborhoods. The Plan recommends several multiple family areas located near shopping and transportation corridors. Multi-family residential areas are not confined to a separate district but are located in or near each of the three communities of Alamo, Danville and San Ramon. The purpose is to integrate this housing alternative into suburban communities and to provide the convenience which is attractive to the retired, young couples, and single parents.

Very Low Density Multiple Family. 4 to 7 units per net acre. The Very Low Density Multiple Family dwelling category was developed for the 1971 San Ramon Area Plan to provide for clustering of single family dwellings. Designation for multiple family use does not prevent clustering of detached units, but does provide a measure of flexibility for efficient use of land. Luxury townhouses with many outdoor and recreational amenities can be anticipated in this category. The County Zoning Ordinance reflects this General Plan category in two compatible multiple zoning categories; M-5 and M-6, which allow up to 4.5 and 6.8 units per net acre respectively.

Low Density Multiple Family. 7 to 12 units per net acre. Low Density Multiple Family areas provide for a higher density still compatible with the suburban life style. This designation allows densities ranging from 7 to 12 units per net acre with an average of 9.5 units per net acre. The upper range is the maximum practicable for townhouse development. The emphasis here is on convenient location, transition from residential to business use, and a suburban atmosphere through landscaped open areas.

Medium Density Multiple Family. 13 to 21 dwelling units per net acre. This is the highest residential density considered appropriate for the Planning Area. Several projects in the Planning Area are developed in this range of densities. They, and the several additional areas shown on the Plan Map, are located to be convenient to transportation, shopping and local employment.

Employment Areas Employment-related land uses are divided into four general categories which reflect the predominant land uses in each. They are: Commercial, Administrative Office, Limited Office, and Controlled Manufacturing.

Commercial areas provide for local shopping and business needs. Administrative Office and Limited Office areas are intended to differentiate between large scale regional management offices and smaller locally oriented services. Limited Office areas are located for convenience to residents and are associated with general commercial areas. Controlled Manufacturing implies light or "clean" industrial and manufacturing businesses. Basic industries such as food processing and foundries are not permitted. This Plan encourages the orderly development of businesses and local employment within the framework of basic goals to retain the natural beauty of the area.

Commercial Four major commercial areas are identified in the Plan, with secondary commercial uses in conjunction with already approved development projects. These four major commercial areas are Alamo, Danville, San Ramon and San Ramon South.

The Plan encourages the expansion of business in specific areas to meet the needs of a growing population, but it does not envision a regional scale shopping center. Strip commercial development is to be avoided. Other small commercial areas are planned throughout the Planning Area in conjunction with approved development projects and designed to serve the residents of the projects.

In addition, this Plan recognizes the need for a limited number of local commercial convenience centers within the Planning Area. Exact locations are not designated in this Plan, but recognition should be given to the need for a limited number of small convenience centers in outlying residential areas. Each proposed center should be considered on its merits and should be acceptable to the residents in the vicinity.

1. Alamo Commercial development in the Alamo area is not intensive; only sixteen acres are occupied by retail business establishments including finance, insurance and real estate offices. These businesses are situated near the intersection of Danville Boulevard and Stone Valley Road. At present, there exist three medium size shopping centers as well as a number of smaller complexes and individual businesses to serve the day-to-day needs of residents.

Alamo provides the most northern commercial district in the Planning Area. It serves primarily the surrounding residential areas. The Plan allows for continued commercial growth within the defined commercial area, which is separated from existing residential areas by the railroad on the west and transitional office uses along Orchard Court. The Plan limits the expansion of these transitional uses to their existing boundaries north and south along Danville Boulevard (see Map 2).

2. Danville Downtown Danville is the major commercial center within the Valley. It is an older commercial area which has grown north and south along the main road. Downtown Danville is confined by Interstate 680 on the east, the railroad tracks on the west, and San Ramon Valley High School on the north. Only areas north of Sycamore Valley Road have the potential for future commercial expansion. A portion of downtown Danville at the intersection of Sycamore Valley Road and San Ramon Valley Boulevard has been designated a Specific Plan Area, because of possible conflicts in land uses and because of its importance as an entrance into Danville. Map 3, Danville Land Use Plan, designates the several land use areas.

The existing Charlotte Wood School site is designated for commercial uses in this Plan. The use of this site for a school is expected to continue for some time, but in the long run it is felt that this area should be converted to commercial uses to stimulate the privately sponsored rejuvenation of downtown Danville, a goal strongly supported by this Plan. Designation of this land for commercial uses is intended to provide maximum flexibility for the redevelopment of this area, and to allow a mix of uses rather than strictly limit future development to commercial uses. Residential units, especially for low income persons or the retired, should be encouraged to be part of any redevelopment proposal. Larger office complexes should also be considered acceptable within this area. Appropriate circulation for commercial uses in the Charlotte Wood School area will require an additional access from the property north to Diablo Road across San Ramon Creek.

3. San Ramon Although most of the commercial area designated around the intersection of Crow Canyon Road and Interstate 680 is vacant, it is expected to become an important business and shopping area as the surrounding residential and industrial lands develop (see Map 4).

4. San Ramon South Alcosta Mall, a community shopping center, serves the southern part of the Planning Area. This center is planned to expand into adjacent vacant land (see Map 5).

Administrative Office A large area around the Interstate 680-Crow Canyon Road interchange is designated for Administrative Office use. This Plan encourages the Crow Canyon Road area to become a major employment area of the San Ramon Valley. The Administrative Office designation requires a minimum lot size of five acres, as differentiated from the approximately 1/3 acre minimum required for Limited Office uses. The large acreage requirement for Administrative Office uses is intended to encourage an office-park setting more compatible with adjoining residential and open space areas.

Limited Office Limited Office areas are located around the Crow Canyon-Interstate 680 interchange and in downtown Danville. This designation is intended to accommodate general office uses on a minimum lot size of approximately 1/3 acre.

Controlled Manufacturing Controlled Manufacturing, the only industrial land use designation in this Plan, provides for "clean" industrial uses, although the existing ordinance code allows for a range of manufacturing uses. Some manufacturing is more intense than is desirable for the San Ramon Planning Area. The Plan allows a range of light industrial uses but excludes heavy industry in order to ensure compatibility with surrounding residential uses.

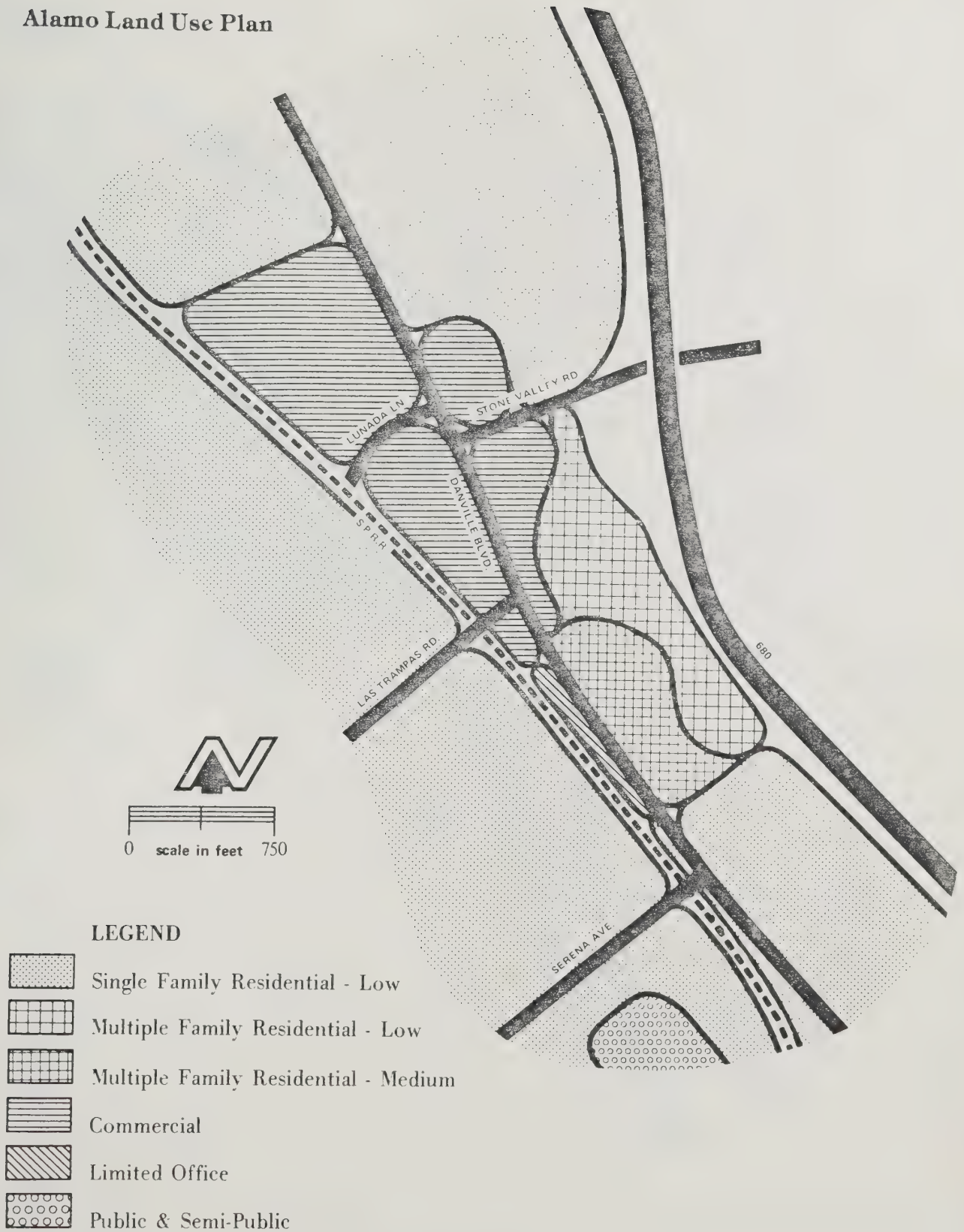
Existing manufacturing is light industrial in nature, which includes the manufacture of agricultural chemicals, communications equipment, fabricated metal products, pharmaceuticals and electronics equipment. Also included in this designation are contractor construction yards. Research and development firms are not specifically included because they are considered services although they often locate in light industrial areas. Although larger firms are primarily located near the Crow Canyon-Interstate 680 Interchange, numerous small fabricating operations are located near Danville interspersed with general businesses.

The San Ramon area contains the greatest amount of industrial acreage within the Planning Area. Because of good access to Interstate 680 and 580 and the railroad, this location is ideal for firms which depend on regular shipments of materials by truck or by rail.

The eventual industrial development of the Bishop Ranch area will make a significant contribution to the tax base of the Valley. This suburban manufacturing area should also enable technical and managerial workers to maintain suburban homes without the need to commute long distances to work.

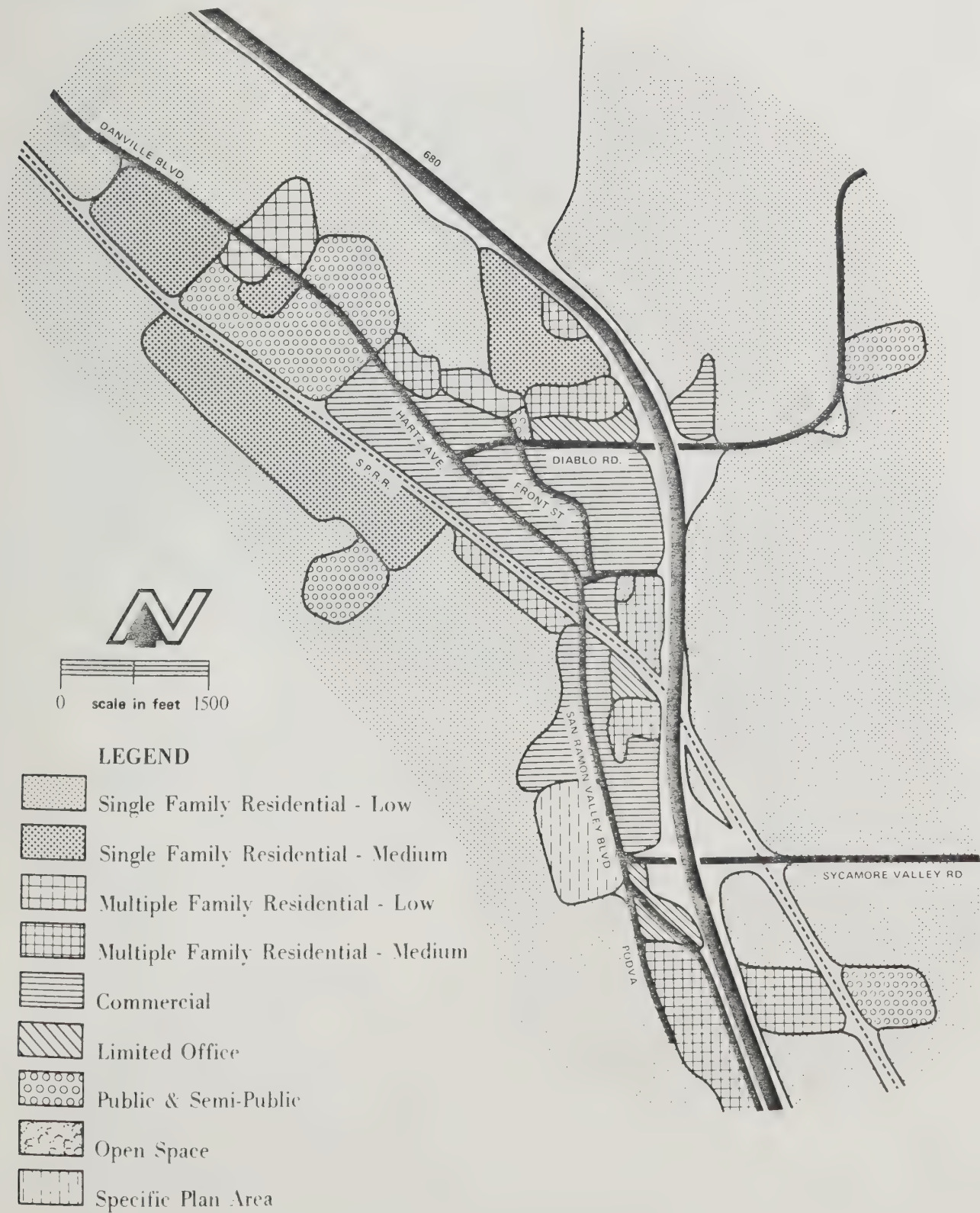
Map 2

Alamo Land Use Plan



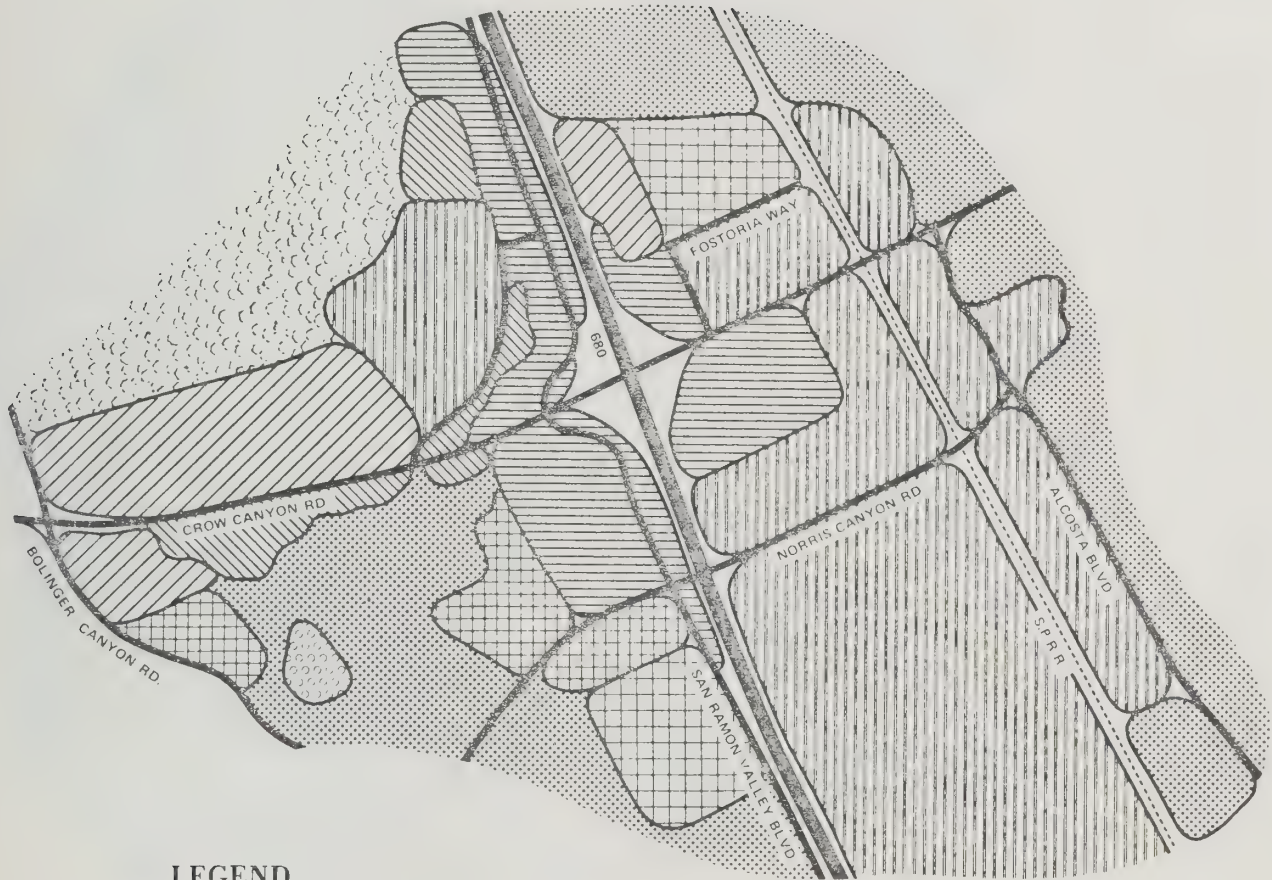
Map 3

Danville Land Use Plan












Map 4

San Ramon Area Land Use Plan



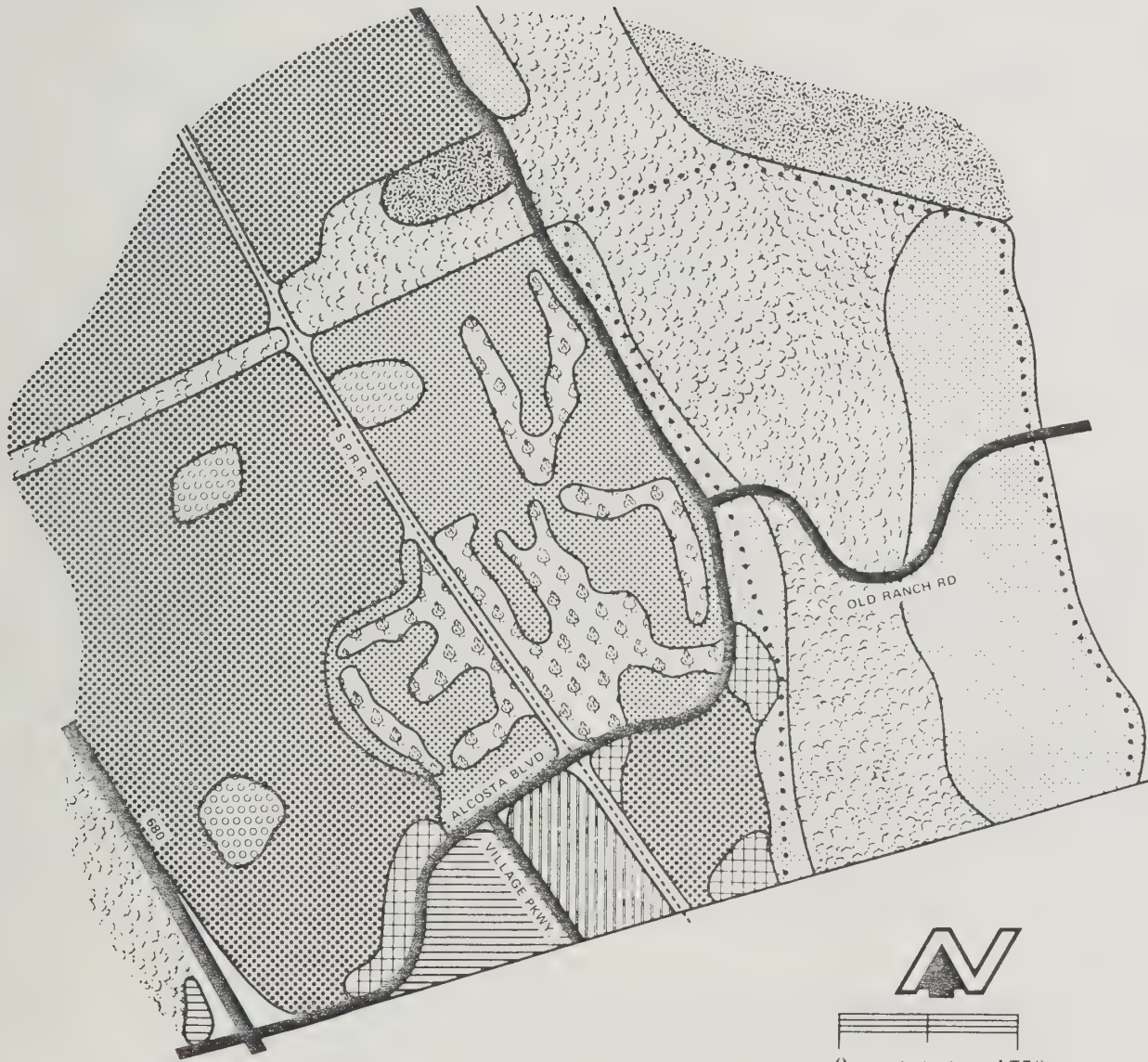
LEGEND

-  Single Family Residential - Medium
-  Multiple Family Residential - Very Low
-  Multiple Family Residential - Medium
-  Commercial
-  Administrative Office
-  Limited Office
-  Controlled Manufacturing
-  Public & Semi-Public
-  General Open Space



Map5

San Ramon South Land Use Plan



LEGEND

	Single Family Residential - Low		Controlled Manufacturing
	Single Family Residential - Medium		Public & Semi-Public
	Single Family Residential - High		General Open Space
	Multiple Family Residential - Medium		Parks & Recreation
	Commercial		Agricultural Preserve
			Special Concern Area Boundary

Public and Semi-Public Uses Substantial land areas are now used for public purposes including schools, libraries, parks, and military lands, and electrical power transmission. These areas are designated as public and semi-public on the Plan Map and are discussed in the Community Facilities section of the Plan.

Open Space Three categories of open space are designated in the Plan: Park and Recreation lands, Agricultural Preserves, and General Open Space.

The park and recreation designation includes publicly-owned parks and lands utilized for local recreation. Within the recreation and parks designation are facilities owned and operated by the State of California (Mt. Diablo State Park), the East Bay Regional Park District (Las Trampas and Morgan Territory), recreation districts and service areas (neighborhood and community parks), and private facilities (golf courses). Publicly owned parks and permanent open space. As new community and neighborhood parks are acquired they also assume the Parks and Recreation designation and should be included in the General Plan as such.

Agricultural Preserve lands are those under Williamson Act contracts with the County, which are expected to remain in agricultural uses for at least ten years in exchange for lowered property assessments. The Plan recognizes agricultural values by designating these areas in an open space category, though they are not permanent open space as are publicly-owned lands. The other category, General Open Space, includes the remaining open space and agricultural land found within the Planning Area. These open space categories are discussed in more detail in the Open Space and Conservation section of this Plan.

Specific Plan Areas There are two Specific Plan Areas designated in the Plan. The first covers a small area located along San Ramon Valley Boulevard at Sycamore Valley Road which forms part of the southern entry into downtown Danville. The purpose of this designation is to ensure that detailed studies are initiated which provide for a coordinated design of these properties and the Plan will have to be amended to designate appropriate land use categories before individual projects can be approved.

The second Specific Plan Area is found in the southerly portion of Vernal Heights area north of Stone Valley Road and east of Interstate 680. While the maximum allowable densities are shown on the plan map as Country Estates and Low Density Single Family Residential, the project allowed in this area must be developed in a manner which maintains the characteristics of the Vernal Drive area to the north; that development of this area shall be based on reasonable locations of building sites as limited by existing topography. The grading plan shall recognize this consideration. The purpose of this designation is to ensure detailed studies are completed prior to the approval of a tentative subdivision map or preliminary development plan.

Special Concern Areas Two areas have been designated as Special Concern Areas because of their key location with regard to environmental and scenic qualities; they are:

Special Concern Area 1, Sycamore Valley, Map 6 The Sycamore Valley area has long been planned for low density single family use on the adopted County General Plan. The Plan recognizes that development will occur in the valley and expresses concerns about the character of this growth. The Sycamore Valley has two dominant visual features which warrant protection: Sycamore Creek and the hills flanking the Valley.

The goal for development in this area is to achieve an appearance of suburban-rural charm in keeping with Planning Area objectives, and to ensure that the Sycamore Valley as a whole will appear to be unified and well-designed, rather than an incremental accumulation of separate conventional subdivisions. Hillside and creek preservation are essential to this concept. The area provides opportunities for innovative design and construction for homes, flood control works, outdoor amenities, and other features which will enable the area to retain its beauty and economic value. The following principles will aid in achieving the General Plan objectives for the area:

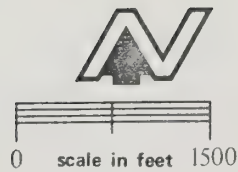
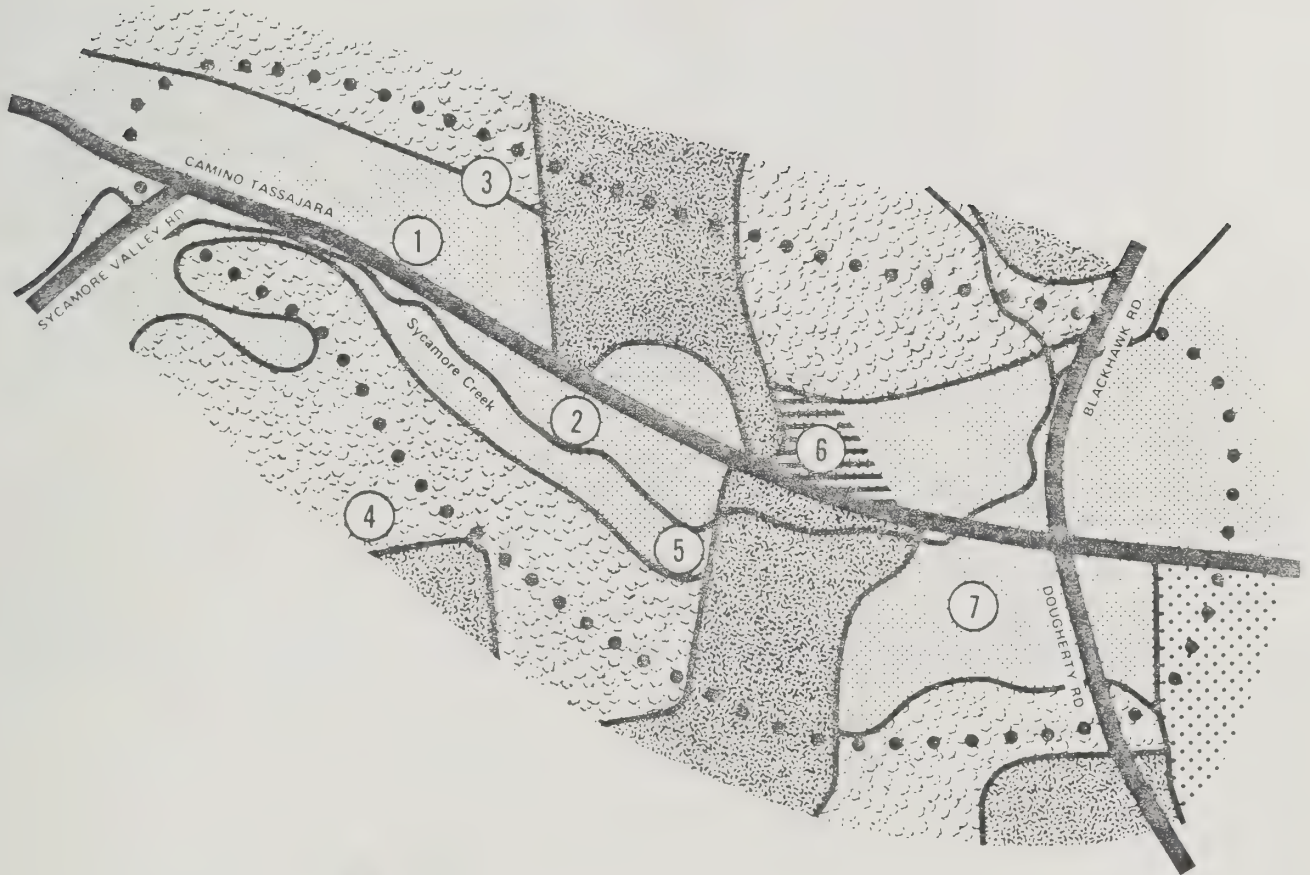
- ☐ Development will be phased in conformance with the present sewer and water sphere of influence area as adopted by the Local Agency Formation Commission of Contra Costa County; and the remainder should be developed in coordination with approved district boundary changes.

The Sycamore Valley parkway will be continued throughout the valley on Camino Tassajara; it should be constructed to provide views of the creek where feasible.






- ☐ Hillsides and ridgetops will provide a backdrop to development. Housing units should be clustered on the valley floor with minimum disturbances to the higher ridgelands. Densities should decrease as development ascends the hillside. All clustered housing is to be of low profile with emphasis on detached dwelling units. Sycamore Creek and its riparian vegetation should be protected in its natural state, as it is a dominant visual feature of the valley and is of value to wildlife.
- ☐ A green belt at least a quarter of a mile wide, running in a north-south direction, should be provided for visual relief from development. This greenbelt should occur near the center of the Special Concern Area.
- ☐ To insure that developments are integrated by trails and to create a sense of community, all major developments are required to be Planned Unit Developments.
- ☐ Owners should be encouraged to develop their properties jointly in order to achieve the objectives of this Special Concern Area.
- ☐ Architectural style and landscaping should reflect the natural beauty of the valley.
- ☐ Although Boone Hill lies to the northwest outside the boundaries of the Special Concern Area, it is part of Short Ridge. The ridgelands from Boone Hill to the Sycamore Special Concern Area should remain in an open state and should not be obscured from view.

Map 6

Special Concern Area 1, Sycamore Valley Plan



LEGEND

-  Country Estate
-  Single Family Residential - Low Density
-  Agricultural Preserve
-  General Open Space
-  Special Concern Boundary

- ① Extend parkway from Sycamore Valley Road along Camino Tassajara
- ② Protect natural environment of Sycamore Creek
- ③ Protect hillsides and ridge tops
Density decreases as slope increases
- ④ Phase development from west to east in conformance with sewer and water Sphere of Influence lines
- ⑤ Low density cluster housing in lower elevations in the valley
- ⑥ North - south greenbelt at least 1/4 mile wide
- ⑦ All major projects should be Planned Unit Development with continuity in design and an integrated trail system

Special Concern Area 2, Lower Dougherty Hills, Map 7 Historically, the lower Dougherty Hills area was a part of the San Ramon Village development proposal. Since that proposal was made years ago, community attitudes and legal requirements have changed. There is now a strong feeling among Planning Area residents that the hills are valuable in their natural state, that they should be protected from development, and that they should remain visible for public scenic benefits. Also, it now appears that building to accommodate a large population in the outlying valley is not appropriate. Since virtually the entire area lies in the Special Studies Zone established by the State for seismic investigations, (see Seismic Safety section) efforts must be made to locate and avoid active or potentially active earthquake fault tracts. The following principles will aid in achieving General Plan objectives for this area:

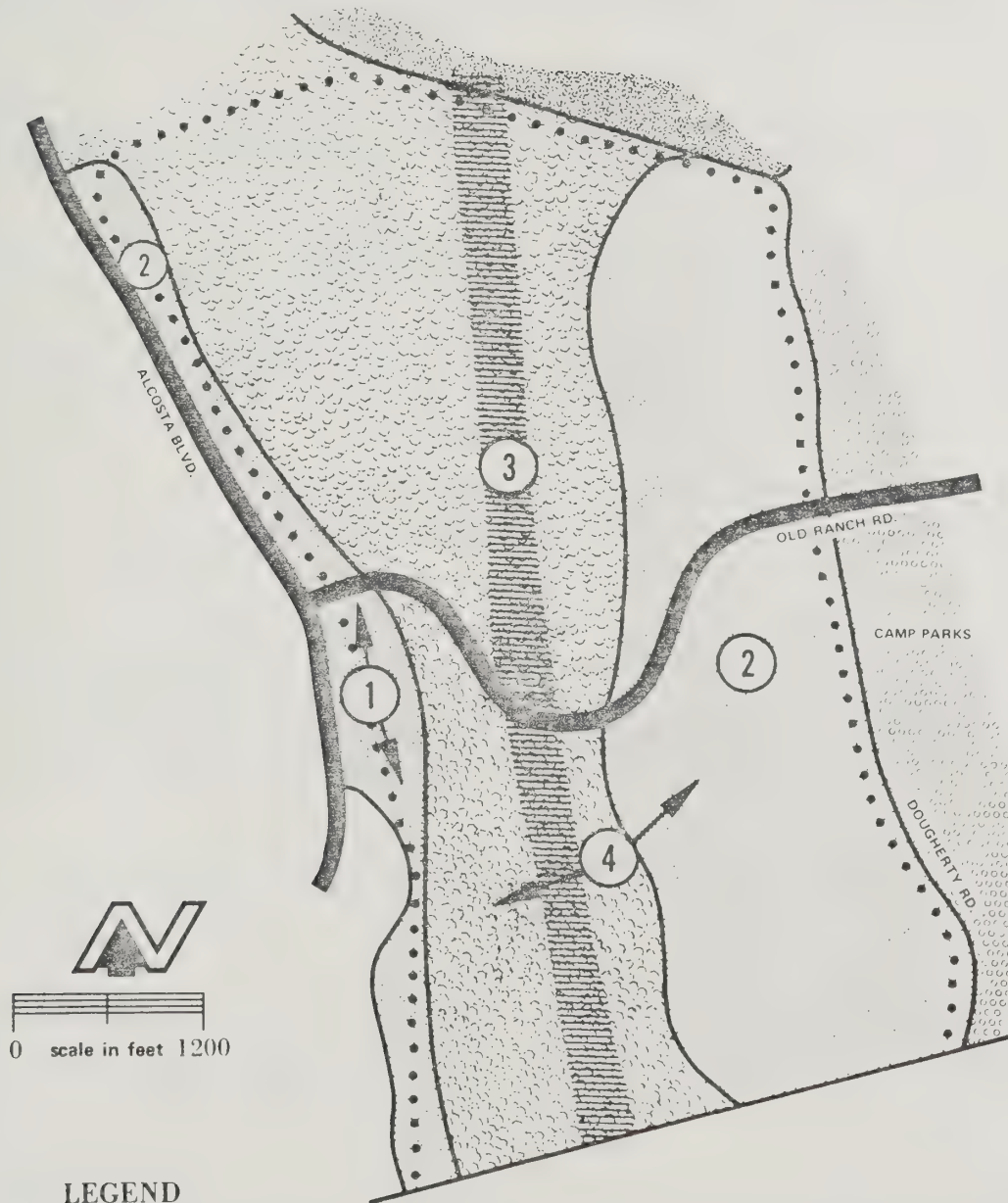
- ☐ All major developments should be Planned Unit Developments. Property owners should be encouraged to work together in order to achieve the objective of an integrated plan for the area rather than the appearance of an incremental accumulation of separate subdivisions.
- ☐ Encouragement should be given to developing mixes of densities and structure types ranging from County Estates to very low density multiple family residential units to allow advantage of site adaptability.
- ☐ Provision of trails is of particular importance here to provide connections to the Camp Parks recreation area and to provide for alternative circulation to schools and shopping areas.
- ☐ Architectural style should reflect the natural open beauty of the hills.
- ☐ Development of the area should be related to existing and proposed development of adjacent areas in Alameda County.

Housing Element Housing policies were formerly incorporated into land use elements, but since 1969 a separate Housing Element of the General Plan has been a State requirement. The purpose of the Housing Element is to make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community. Low income persons comprise a very small proportion of the population of the Planning Area, about 200 families in 1970, and an even smaller number are of a racial minority. The economically disadvantaged and racial minorities therefore do not represent a significant proportion of the community. Thus, the Plan does not provide directly for low income housing. However, it does attempt to provide for sizeable minority social groups present in the community; the retired, young adults, and families with only one parent. State or federal housing programs available should be reviewed to determine whether housing for a low income population can be provided for in the Planning Area.



Areas designated for low and medium density multiple residential units are intended to provide for the retired, young adults, and families with single parents. Many of these housing units will be smaller and lower in cost when compared with other housing in the Planning Area, and will require less commitment of time and income to

Map 7

Special Concern Area 2, Lower Dougherty Hills Plan



LEGEND

-  Area Boundary
-  Single Family Residential - Low
-  General Open Space
-  Agricultural Preserve
-  Public & Semi-Public

- ① Develop west facing slopes first.
- ② Cluster development on lower slopes.
- ③ Ridgeline to remain open.
- ④ Provide trail connections linking Camp Parks and San Ramon Valley.

home maintenance. Areas designated for these units are not confined to a special district but are distributed in several small areas for better integration into the larger community, and their proximity to shopping will add to their value to persons who do not drive or who have little time for the essential chores of running a household. These locations will also be accessible in the future to improved public transportation.

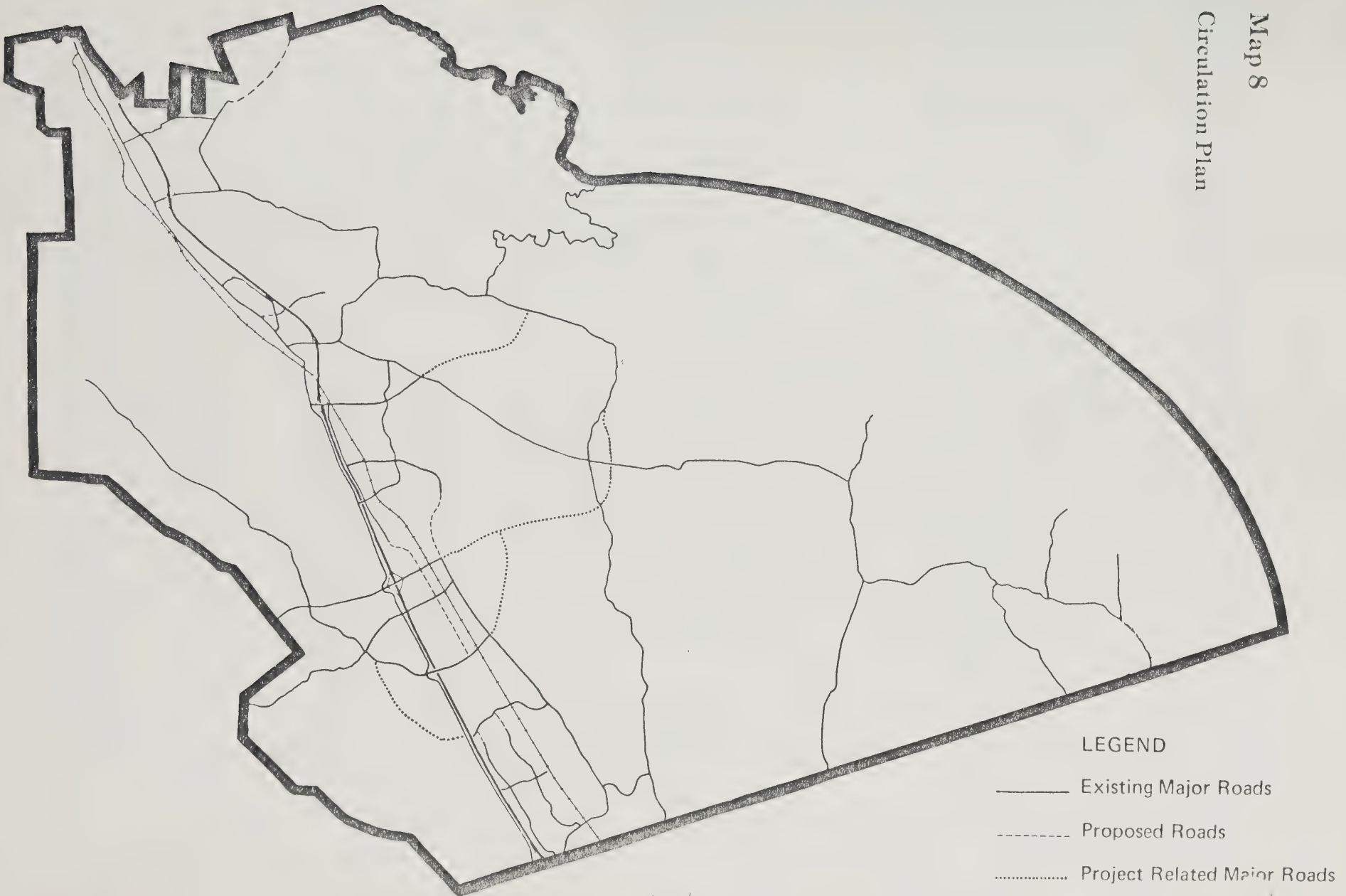
The following principles should be observed to encourage the types of housing units and social settings which will meet the needs of minority social groups in the community:

- Encourage development of some smaller housing units. The densities shown on the General Plan remain constant, but the actual housing units should be smaller. With the strong trend toward decreased family size, homes can be built with less living space than is common in the Valley at this time. For instance, fewer bedrooms would be satisfactory for some of the population and would reflect the trend to smaller families.
- Units which are partially incomplete can be constructed and sold, to allow the purchaser to acquire the home at a lower cost and to complete the unit as time and money become available.
- The land use element of the Plan described general densities of development. The Plan also supports the use of the cluster development concept on the lower elevations of hill areas, and on level lands where clustering can be harmoniously integrated into existing residential areas. Certain cost savings are inherent in this approach, and it can preserve significant amounts of open space and other amenities.
- Specialized housing for the elderly should be encouraged. These should be small scale projects and should be integrated by design and scale into the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Recognizing that the greatest housing asset available in the Planning Area is its existing high quality housing stock, the Plan encourages the conservation and improvement of existing residential neighborhoods. New development will be designed and located to avoid damaging the value of the present large investment in housing.

Circulation The purpose of the Circulation Element of the General Plan is to designate a system of highways and streets which will provide adequate links within and between the proposed land uses and which will meet the transportation requirements and objectives of the community. The Circulation Plan is shown on Map 8.

The Highway System The San Ramon Valley is served by a skeletal network of highway transportation facilities. The backbone of the system is the Interstate 680 freeway running north-south for the entire length of the valley. It is augmented by a series of east-west county roads which serve adjacent suburban development and rural areas.

Map 8
Circulation Plan



LEGEND

- Existing Major Roads
- - - Proposed Roads
- Project Related Major Roads

The road system in the Planning Area was originally developed to serve an agricultural economy and a small population. As development occurred the transportation system was improved, but not rapidly enough to keep pace with the growth of development. The system's general layout, however, is well planned and works adequately in most locations.

Interstate 680 is the major traffic corridor from the Planning Area to regional employment centers. At one time the State had planned to build additional highways to help move traffic out of the valley. The San Ramon Valley generates a substantial volume of traffic destined for the San Francisco and Oakland employment centers. In consequence, the intersection of State Route 24 and Interstate 680 is heavily congested during commute hours. A second major flow of traffic utilizes Interstate 680 south to Interstate 580 Alameda County. As development in the San Ramon and Amador Valleys occurs, traffic on these facilities will increase. Widening of Interstate 680 to six lanes should provide the capacity needed to avoid severe commute congestion.

Danville Boulevard, Hartz Avenue and San Ramon Valley Boulevard form a continuous route extending the length of the Planning Area, which connects all the major commercial areas in the Valley, and was the main route for through-traffic prior to completion of the freeway. It still plays a major role in Valley travel. For years there has been conflict between those persons who would improve portions of the road and those who would preserve its existing tree-lined character. Portions of this road have been improved to carry heavier traffic, while other sections remain narrow and rural. This Plan supports the concept of keeping the scenic route aspect of the road, but recognizes that conditions and needs change and that adequate setbacks should be required so that they will be available in the future if needed. The portion of Danville Boulevard north of Del Amigo Road should remain a two lane road, however, minor improvements to provide additional safety and increased capacity are acceptable. The lands shown as residential on the Plan Map adjacent to these roads should be restricted to residential uses. Strip commercial and office uses under land use permits are inconsistent with this Plan and are to be restricted.

The Plan calls for few major additions to the roadway system. Most improvements will be provided through the development process on frontage rights-of-way or by off-site improvement requirements.

Public safety requires a degree of separation between high speed arterials and residential uses. Driveways should not open onto arterials, nor should yards where children play. Flexibility in site design, an important principle of the Plan, can be used to avoid driveway entrances onto arterials. New arterials should be so located as to be separated from new residential areas.

Freeways The function of a freeway is to expedite travel between relatively distant areas. Freeways are designed for high speeds and large volumes of traffic.

Construction of Interstate 680 began in the Valley in 1962 and was completed in 1966. The completion of this freeway provided a major stimulus to development of the area. Interstate 680, six lanes for most of its length in the San Ramon Valley, was widened in 1974-75 to provide adequate capacity for the increasing traffic. At that

time a new interchange was added at Diablo Road which further established downtown Danville as the primary commercial area in the Valley.

Arterials Arterials link major areas within the community with each other and carry traffic from the collector streets to the freeway. Arterial streets should be designed to operate at moderate speeds consistent with the residential character of the area.

Major arterials in the Planning Area are shown on the Circulation Plan. In addition to the existing arterial system, the Plan includes several new major arterials. The Crow Canyon Road extension and the Sycamore Valley Road extension are tied directly to the Blackhawk Ranch project and will be completed if required, as a condition of approval for that project. If the Sycamore Valley Road extension across Short Ridge is constructed, a connection to development on interior valleys should not be allowed. An additional project-related arterial is the Bollinger extension to the Crow Canyon extension shown on the east side of the San Ramon Valley. Although its construction is not a condition of approval, it also is intended to accommodate the Blackhawk project. The Bollinger extension should only be constructed concurrently with the interchange at Interstate 680. The remainder will be built concurrently with the developments for which they are needed.

The recent completion of Alcosta Boulevard northward to Crow Canyon Road provides a parallel north-south connection to serve the Valley. It is recommended as a high priority item that the County consider the extension of Railroad Avenue to improve Danville circulation.

Collectors Collector streets connect portions of the Planning Area, collect traffic from the minor streets in residential areas, and carry local traffic to shopping centers, schools, arterials, and freeways.

A system of collector streets is currently being developed in conjunction with Assessment District 1973-3 (Bishop Ranch). When completed, this system will provide a functional integration of the previously developed road networks of Danville and San Ramon.

It is proposed that a few incomplete links in the existing collector system be constructed to eliminate "dead-end" streets and to provide more direct access to various points in the community. These include El Capitan in the Danville area, and Davona Road in the San Ramon area. These links should be completed as development occurs.

Some neighborhoods are isolated by reason of a single access road which may be narrow and provide inadequate access for fire equipment, or may be subject to severe traffic jams in case of emergencies. Consideration should be given to linking such neighborhood road to improve safety, where neighborhood values would not be damaged by attracting through-traffic.

Minor Streets Minor streets provide construction from individual properties to the rest of the road network. Most of the streets in the Planning Area are of this type. These streets are developed in conformance with the County Subdivision Ordinance.

The Plan allows certain deviations from existing standards to preserve the rural view of life. Roads in Open Space and Country Estate land use areas may be considered for lower standards as long as adequate public safety concerns are met.

Public Transit Existing public transportation in the developed portions of the Planning Area is marginal. The existing system is built around the bus feeder line provided by the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BARTD).

It is anticipated that the public transit will play a bigger role in transportation throughout the Valley. Improved transportation service is encouraged by this Plan, especially for the trip to work. The Plan recognizes that additional transit operations will be required to service future development needs, and encourages efforts to provide this service.

Other Modes of Transportation A Southern Pacific Railroad line extends through the Planning Area parallel to Interstate 680, and two sidings in the Planning Area, one at Danville and one in San Ramon. The Southern Pacific Railroad operates freight trains from Martinez to San Ramon twice a week, but there is no passenger service along this line.

The Southern Pacific right-of-way is a valuable resource for the Valley. It is proposed to serve as the north-south spine of the trail system running the full length of the Planning Area. Major efforts should be made to limit encroachments onto the right-of-way by urban uses, which would preclude its future use for trails or other public purposes; the use of this right-of-way for trails is an important part of the trails component of the Recreation Element.

Scenic Routes The Scenic Routes Element of the County General Plan is one of the State mandated elements of City and County General Plans. A scenic route, as defined in the County Scenic Routes Element, is a road, street, or freeway which traverses a scenic corridor of relatively high visual or cultural value. A scenic corridor consists of much of the adjacent area that can be seen from the road. Scenic Routes are shown on Map 9.

The Board of Supervisors adopted the Countywide Scenic Routes Element of the County General Plan in September 1974. The basic premise for that Plan was that much of the perception we have of our surroundings occurs while traveling in the automobile. The primary purpose of the Plan was to establish policies for the protection of the aesthetic quality of these roads.

Since the adoption of the County Element by the Board of Supervisors, the City of Walnut Creek has adopted a Scenic Routes Element which includes Tice Valley Road as a scenic route. This Plan includes the Tice Valley Road-Hillgrade link and is compatible with the Walnut Creek and Countywide Scenic Routes Elements, though it provides additional scenic routes, not shown on the County Scenic Routes Map.

Implementation of the Scenic Route program will be through a scenic route combining district. The purpose of this district is not to replace existing zoning but to add policies and restrictions to protect the visual quality of each route.

Map 9
Scenic Routes Plan



Open Space and Conservation In 1973 the County adopted a combined Open Space-Conservation Element to the County General Plan. These two subjects are addressed separately below and provide additional detail to those countywide elements.

Open Space Element The State law requiring an Open Space Element of the General Plan defines open space as essentially unimproved land used for the preservation and continued production of natural resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety.

This General Plan includes three categories of open space. They are:

- Parks and Recreation
- Agricultural Preserves
- General Open Space

These categories are intended to provide information on the current status of the land and should not be considered separate categories for the purpose of determining General Plan compliance. Any changes in the open space status of land among these three categories is consistent with this Plan.

Together, these open space areas include approximately seventy percent of the 112 square miles of the Planning Area, indicating that the Planning Area includes agricultural districts as well as suburban communities.

Parks and Recreation This designation on the land use map includes Mt. Diablo State Park, Las Trampas Regional Wilderness, Morgan Territory Regional Park, and local areas including County-owned Sugarloaf Hill in Alamo, the site of Athan Downs Park in San Ramon, and the community park in Danville. The designation reflects presently owned and committed parklands, which are permanent open space. Suitable general locations for future parks are shown on the Recreation Plan.

Agricultural Preserve Agricultural Preserve lands are under Williamson Act contracts with the County to remain in commercial agriculture and compatible uses for the ten year contract period, renewed each year, in exchange for lowered land assessment. These areas are given a separate category on the map in order to reflect and support the commitment of the owners, and are expected to remain in agriculture for the effective period of the Plan. They are not permanent open space, but may be designated for other purposes at some future time by a General Plan amendment. Conversely, a General Plan designation other than open space will not prevent properties from entering into open space use contracts, and such contractual arrangements are considered in conformance with this Plan, if these lands participate in the Agricultural Preserve program, or are subject to other similar enforceable restrictions. Decisions on contracts will be made on the merits of each case, and will not be restricted by the land use classifications in this Plan.

General Open Space Lands designated as General Open Space are primarily in agriculture. Much of this land is expected to remain agricultural for the effective period of the Plan, although open space areas associated with large development pro-

jects will be recreational, either as unirrigated natural areas, golf courses, or recreation centers. Existing golf courses are also shown as open space, as is P. G. & E.'s power transmission right-of-way in San Ramon. These are all privately owned lands and are not permanent open space unless development rights are deeded to the County. Open space areas associated with development projects are compatible with urban land use categories.

Conservation Element The Conservation Element is concerned with the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. The retention of large land areas in open space uses will result in the continued utilization of land for agricultural production. Large natural or agricultural areas also provide the benefits of wildlife maintenance, stream preservation, and conservation of soil and vegetation resources. The concepts delineated here conform with urban conservation policies in the Countywide Element and provide details suited to the Planning Area.

Conservation in the Course of Development Important conservation considerations affect areas designated for urban expansion. Utilization of natural resources for industrial, commercial, residential, recreational, and support facilities requires a sensitivity to the nature of resources and their capability to sustain various levels of urbanization. The Plan designates types and intensities of uses appropriate for differing land areas, as well as the consideration of proximity to freeways and similar facilities. Lower densities of housing on steeper lands will tend to minimize soil erosion, wildlife habitat destruction, and destruction of trees. The policies relating permissible densities to slope steepness, to encourage clustering of housing units in order to avoid steep unstable slopes, scenic ridgelines and waterways, and provision for flexibility in site design, will act to reduce environmental damages from development further.

Air Pollution Air pollution problems are of great concern to the community. The rapid growth rate of the Livermore-Amador-San Ramon air basin has resulted in air quality problems in the Planning Area. The effects of vehicular emissions which accompany urbanization are compounded by the surrounding hills and the characteristic temperature inversion layer which confine the air mass in the basins.

Air quality management is the responsibility of federal, state, and regional agencies. It is difficult to predict what regulations may be imposed on the Planning Area by these agencies. Current proposals include continuing efforts to reduce vehicle emissions (a benefit rapidly lost as traffic volumes increase), greater reliance on public transit, shifting to a less polluting vehicle power source, and restrictions on the type and extent of land development.

Until more is known about air pollution in the Valley, community concerns about air pollution can be reflected in evaluating the potential air quality impacts of new roads, road extensions, opening additional land areas in outlying valleys to development, and by locating certain uses such as school yards, bike trails, and fire stations at a distance from pollution corridors along the freeway and major arterials. Considerations of agricultural productivity and livestock health are required in land use decisions which would expose agricultural districts to higher levels of vehicular emissions.

Scenic Conservation Scenic conservation is extremely important to the residents of the Planning Area. The Plan provides for the retention of visual quality through the basic distribution of land uses and by Plan references regarding refinements in each area which are essential in fulfilling the goals and objectives of the Plan. Scenic Ridges and Riparian Vegetation are shown on Map 10. In areas designated for development, and particularly residential development outside the floor of the central Valley, the following principles should be strictly applied:

- ☐ High quality engineering of slopes is required to avoid soil erosion, downstream flooding, slope failure, loss of vegetative cover, high maintenance costs, property damages, and damages to visual quality. Particularly vulnerable areas should be avoided. Massive topographic modification should be avoided.
- ☐ Where flood control and drainage works are required along natural water courses, special consideration should be given to using innovative means of retaining the natural appearance of the waterway, and preserve the vegetation and wildlife it supports. Where rights-of-way are designated in the General Plan for trails or other public uses, the right-of-way should be made available for multipurpose uses.
- ☐ Conservation of the scenic beauty of the Planning Area requires the restoration of natural contours and vegetation after grading and other land disturbances, and the design of public and private projects to minimize damages to significant trees and other visual landmarks.
- ☐ Development in outlying areas should not overtax the capabilities of the aquifer or the capability of the ground to absorb sewage effluents.
- ☐ Proposals for major developments in outlying areas should be reviewed from the point of view of their potential impacts on agricultural production and economics.
- ☐ Public facilities for outdoor recreation and alternative modes of transportation should remain an important land utilization objective in the community, to promote high visual quality, air quality maintenance, and to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities of all residents.

Recreation The provision of recreation areas and facilities is a function of several government levels as well as the private sector. Recreation areas within or very near the Planning Area are provided by the State, the East Bay Regional Park District, local park agencies, school districts, private businesses, homeowners associations, and county service areas. Local public recreation facilities, neighborhood and community parks, are largely lacking in the Planning Area.

Adequate local and larger-scale regional recreation facilities are an essential part of any urbanized area. Parts of the Planning Area which are not now developed to the fullest may not have an immediate need for public outdoor recreation. However, if land is not acquired prior to full development it will be costly to acquire at a future time. General locations and types of planned recreation facilities are shown on Map 11.

Map 10 Scenic Ridges and Riparian Vegetation



Regional Park Facilities Several regional agencies provide recreational facilities in Contra Costa County. The State of California Department of Parks and Recreation owns and operates Mt. Diablo State Park, approximately 10,000 acres in size. This park is planned to expand to the south, east and west during the next decade. Over 2,000 acres of land are scheduled for dedication to the State as part of approved projects, with additional buffering to be provided by project open space. The State's adopted acquisition schedule calls for land acquisition to supplement these dedicated lands.

The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) provides the 2,600 acre Las Trampas Wilderness Area, of which one thousand acres were acquired in 1974. Additional acquisitions are anticipated from time to time. Probable additions are designated as General Open Space in this Plan.

The Master Plan adopted by EBRPD calls for the acquisition of the Morgan Territory Wilderness Area on the eastern side of the Planning Area along Morgan Territory Road. In 1975 the EBRPD acquired an initial 1,000 acres to implement the plan, with additional lands to be acquired in the future.

Also, there is the prospect that the Camp Parks Recreation Area now located wholly within Alameda County will be expanded northward to include the federally-owned Camp Parks lands within Contra Costa County, if the area is designated excess federal land.

Local Public Parks The Planning Area is presently served by four public agencies which provide service to limited geographic areas—the Green Valley Park and Recreation District which operates a swimming pool and grounds on two acres of land, and County Recreation Service Area R-5 which operates a one acre park for the Danville-South subdivision.

Two other agencies, the Valley Community Services District and County Recreation Service Area R-7, have more extensive service areas and are charged with providing most of the public local recreational facilities for the Planning Area.

The Valley Community Services District in the southern San Ramon Valley includes parts of Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. Its existing neighborhood parks are Armstrong Park at Neil Armstrong School and the Country Club Tot Lot at Country Club School. The Valley Community Services District is also acquiring land for the Boone West neighborhood park and has provided an olympic-size swimming pool adjacent to California High School in cooperation with the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Valley Community Services District also owns a twenty acre park site on Montevideo Drive. It is planned that some additional land to the north will be dedicated to complete this community park, which is to be developed jointly by the Valley Community Services District and County Recreation Service Area R-7.

County Service Area R-7 is a park and recreation County Service Area approved in the June, 1974 election. The Service Area will acquire and operate parks using property tax revenues and the park dedication fees required by ordinance from new residential developments. It will also receive funds from the State Parks Bond Act to aid in land

Map 11
Recreation Plan



LEGEND

- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Use Area
- ▨ Open Space Area

acquisition for a park site in Alamo, and has recently acquired a ten acre site adjacent to the Tibros Intermediate School site which will form the nucleus of a community park in the Danville area.

The local parks portion of the Recreation Element has been coordinated with the plans of the park and recreation agencies serving the Valley. The Plan includes some park sites not included in the respective plans of these agencies. This is especially true in areas beyond the boundaries of park agency jurisdictions, where parks will be needed to serve the planned future populations. The location of park sites as shown on the map reflect a need in the general area; the actual details on the size and location of facilities will be determined as park development occurs (see Map 11).

Special Use Areas The Plan includes the designation of "Special Use Areas" to distinguish specialized and complementary recreational areas which are not normally considered local parks. The special use areas shown on the recreation map include trail staging areas, equestrian facilities, roadside rests, and passive natural areas that could be utilized for environmental education. This concept may also apply to flood control and water recreation areas, natural habitat preserves, or other special recreation uses identified in the future.

Private Facilities A growing number of private recreational facilities are available to community residents. Three golf courses, Diablo, Roundhill, and San Ramon National, currently serve the community. Additional golf courses may be developed as part of approved projects. In addition, several private golf driving ranges and tennis clubs are coming into existence. Commercial stables provide an additional source of private recreation and are to be encouraged in appropriate locations to conform with the theme of maintaining the Valley's rural view of life.

In recent years private recreation areas within Planned Unit Developments have gained in popularity. These recreation facilities are available to residents and their guests, and may include swimming pools, tennis courts, riding stables, golf courses, informal park areas, and recreation buildings. Although private recreation facilities can meet some of the recreation needs of the homeowners, they should be viewed as complementary facilities since they do not totally replace public parks nor can they meet all the needs and demands for public recreation. The provision of additional private recreational facilities, in appropriate locations, is encouraged by this Plan.

Trails Map 12 shows trails for bicycling, horseback riding and hiking in the Planning Area. These trails are part of a Countywide and regional trails network and connect to proposed facilities in Alameda County and the City of Walnut Creek. Bicycle trails may function either as recreational trails or as complementary transportation routes within public road rights-of-way. Trails are planned to connect all major parks, numerous schools, and to provide a basic pattern to supplement the circulation system of the Planning Area. Trails are not intended for use by motorized vehicles unless so specified. Horse trails are planned to link all portions of the Valley, but emphasize service to the Country Estate and rural areas of the Valley with primary regional connections to Mt. Diablo State Park and to Las Trampas Regional Wilderness Area. Hiking trails are associated with horse riding trails in most cases. Most separate hiking trails are located in already established park facilities and do not represent connec-

Map 12
Trails Plan



LEGEND

- Bicycle Path
- Riding and Hiking Trails
- . - . - . Bicycle, Riding and Hiking

ting links. Rest stops are needed along the regional trails. Where practical, these should be associated with parks, schools, or other community facilities.

In addition to the major trails shown on the map, there is a need for minor connections (feeder trails) between various community facilities and the regional trail system. Feeder trail requirements depend on the location of future community facilities and can be identified when new schools, parks, and other community facilities are sited.

The major north-south route in the trail system runs along the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way. If this route cannot be developed for trail use, San Ramon Creek should be considered as the primary alternative. Trails shown on the Plan map are schematic in nature; while engineering studies will probably show that most, if not all, trails can be installed in ways that are well-located and safe, detailed design plans may require the shifting of specific locations.

Trail goals and objectives are those of the Countywide Riding, Hiking, and Biking Trails Plans, while the Trails Plan Map modifies trail locations shown on previous trail plans.

Public and Seismic Safety The Seismic Safety and Public Safety Elements, mandated by State law, require local governments to recognize seismic and other hazards and incorporate policies for public protection from these hazards into the planning processes.

Geologic Safety The topography and geologic structures of the Planning Area include three physiographic regions, the Las Trampas Ridge and Rocky Ridge area bordering Bollinger Canyon, the central Valley corridor along San Ramon Creek, and the Diablo Range and its associated foothills and smaller valleys on the east side of the central Valley.

The Las Trampas Ridge area consists of a series of folded rock strata with a predominance of slopes greater than 30 percent at higher elevation. Much of this region is underlain by the Orinda Formation which is known for its propensity to slide, as is evidenced by the prevalence of landslide deposits delineated by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The general case is that existing slide deposits have the highest risk of movement, but it is also true that development operations increase the instability of any slope, a hazard that can be at least partially overcome in many cases with exceptional engineering care.

The central Valley is a narrow alluvial corridor composed of water-deposited materials from the bordering hills, mainly by San Ramon Creek and South San Ramon Creek and their tributaries. These flood plains attracted the earliest development and continue to be desirable for industrial, commercial, and residential uses because they are relatively level.

The eastern Planning Area includes steep hills, narrow valleys and the higher mass of the Diablo Range. Alamo Ridge, Short Ridge, and the Sherburne Hills are underlain by folded sedimentary rock of the Orinda Formation. The Dougherty Hills are underlain

Map 13

Generalized Slope



Source: U.S.G.S. slope map as generalized by the
Contra Costa County Planning Dept.

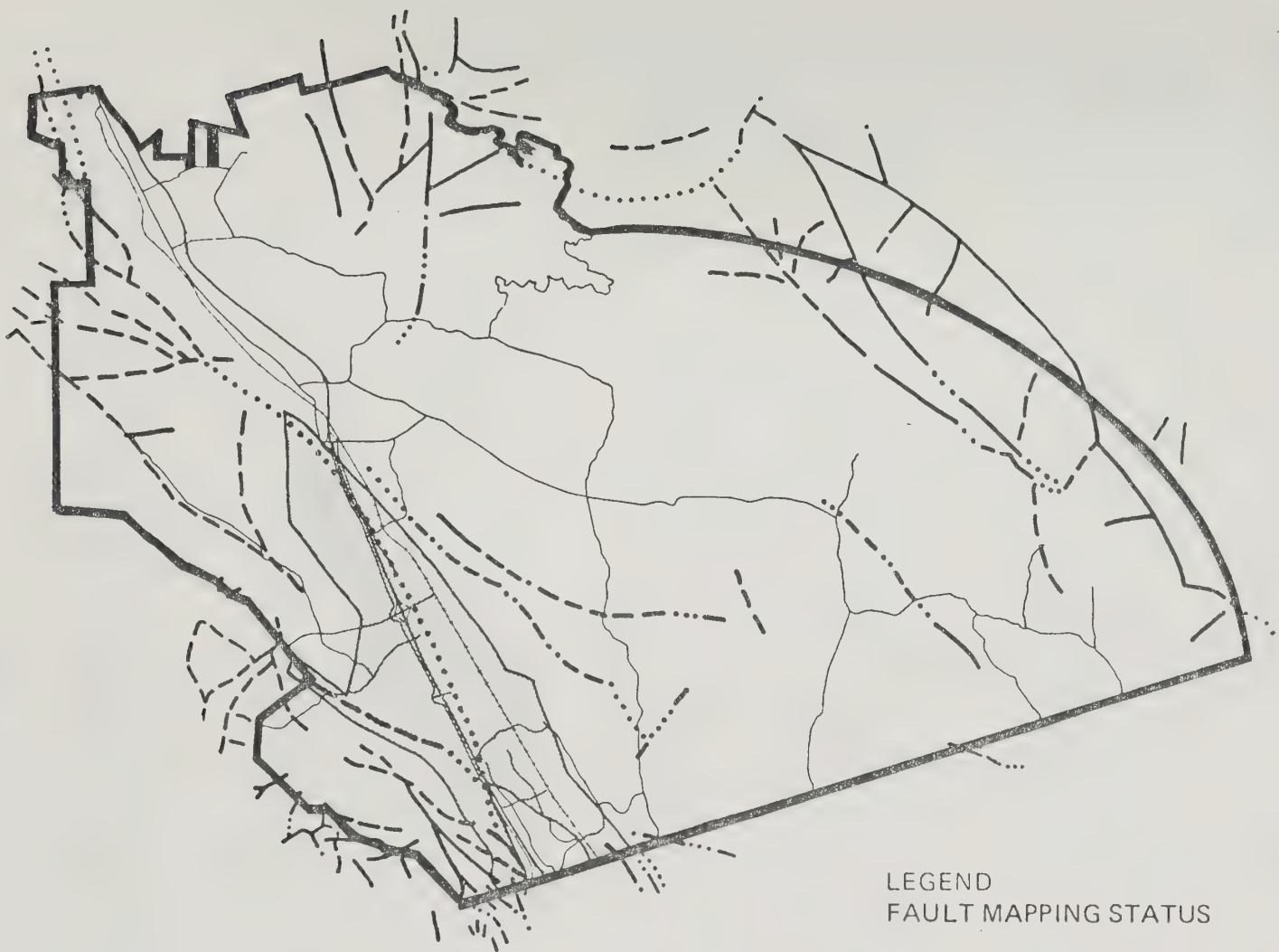
by nearly vertical rock strata of the Tassajara Formation, which has characteristics similar to the Orinda Formation. All of these hills tend to be slide-prone. Moderately steep slopes of approximately 15 to 25 percent appear to be more stable under natural conditions, but may show increases in slide risks when developed. Some properties on the gentle slopes of the Sherburne Hills, along Tassajara Road, have sustained slide damages. The USGS has delineated many slides in the easterly part of this region, with a definite pattern of abundant and massive slide deposits occurring on steeper slopes. The smaller number of slides recorded on the southern Dougherty Hills is due to the more moderately steep slopes (see Map 13).

The generally unstable nature of slopes in the Planning Area indicates that great care should be exercised in locating homes or other buildings on all but the most gentle slopes, and that slopes over 25 percent are not suitable for conventional pad grading or other severe land disturbances, such as vegetation clearing, which would tend to increase slope instability. Where assigned to residential use, slopes of 15 percent or more should be developed in lower range of densities established in the General Plan and clustered housing on the less hazardous areas of large developments should be encouraged, as is recommended for the Special Concern Areas. Virtually all slopes of 30 percent and over in the Planning Area designated for residential use should use clustering to avoid hazards where practicable, and when lots are formed each should be large enough to ensure that a safe buildable site for house and driveway can be found. This may require a lot size larger than the minimum specified for Country Estate areas. Flexibility in site design and lot layout will also provide a measure of safety in potentially hazardous areas. Development of steep areas, or areas underlain by major slide deposits not easily secured by engineering, should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. If development should occur on steep areas, extreme land disturbances from grading and vegetation clearing should be avoided. Special engineering for property safety may be required in these areas. Each project should be evaluated according to these principles in order to permit the maximum in project design flexibility while protecting subsequent owners from geologic hazards.

Seismic Safety Seismic hazards in the Planning Area are related to active and potentially active faults and to groundshaking resulting from local and regional earthquakes. Many fault traces have been discovered in the Planning Area, some of which are part of the active Calaveras and Pleasanton fault zone (Map 14). The Calaveras fault is the major fault in the Planning Area and it is, at least in part, responsible for the wide, trench-like San Ramon Valley. On July 3, 1861, a major earthquake on the Calaveras occurred in the vicinity of Dublin. Contemporary reports tell of a nine mile long fissure opening on the west side of the San Ramon Valley. Many other faults cross the Planning Area, some of which are subsidiary zones of faulting which branch off of the Calaveras fault while others are radial and concentric faults which owe their origin to the uplift of Mt. Diablo. The Calaveras fault zone has been designated as a Special Study Zone by the State Division of Mines and Geology pursuant to the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act. Within the Special Studies Zone geologic investigations are required by State law to discover the precise location of active fault traces prior to project approval, and similar investigation may also be required by the County in other areas believed to have potentially active fault traces. Structures to be built near any active fault trace will be set back 50 feet or more from the trace. The unbuildable areas may be used for roads or vehicle parking or, where practicable, they

Map 14

Earthquake Faults and Seismic Special Study Zones



LEGEND FAULT MAPPING STATUS

- Fault Location
- Approximate Location
- Location Uncertain
- State Special Studies Zones (as of July, 1975)

may be incorporated into open space or recreation plans. The act affects only new real estate developments, not existing development or open space.

The purposes of the seismic investigation program are to ensure that persons and property are not exposed to the risk of fault movement and that construction methods and utility installations reflect seismic hazards.

Damages from earthquake groundshaking are usually greater than damages from the movement of the fault itself. The risk of damages from groundshaking is more closely related to the nature of the ground and type of building construction than to proximity to the fault. Landslides and rockslides may be triggered by earthquakes, and the deep alluvial deposits of the valleys may increase the amplitude and duration of ground waves. Thus, buildings on "poor ground" may suffer damages far beyond damages to similar buildings more favorably located.

Soil investigations for major subdivisions are required by the California Subdivision Map Act. Geologic investigations are also required where adverse conditions are suspected. These reports enable the soil engineer and geologist to provide the best known methods of improving soil and bedrock conditions and avoiding particularly hazardous areas. These reports also enable the County Grading Engineer and County Geologist to bring potentially hazardous conditions to the attention of the project engineers, and to require measures which will reduce the risk of seismic and other geologic damages. Studies and reports for lot splits are relatively superficial, so it is especially important to provide large lots in any area which is likely to be unstable in earthquakes so that the subsequent developer can have some flexibility in locating a stable building site. Lot split proposals should be reviewed for hazard probability before being approved.

Interstate 680 is essential to the Planning Area for disaster evacuation and the movement of emergency vehicles. The Planning Area does not contain many unreinforced masonry buildings of the type which are particularly susceptible to total collapse. The one and two story frame buildings which predominate throughout this area may be damaged in a major earthquake, but very few would be likely to collapse. Fires started from broken utility lines could cause more property damages and risks to life in the Planning Area than the earthquake itself. The Uniform Building Code, enforced by the County Building Inspection Department, is satisfactory for homes and one or two story commercial buildings. Critical and "lifeline" facilities such as fire stations, schools, hospitals, and electric power stations may require additional measures to reduce the risk of earthquake damages.

Flooding Flooding in the Planning Area is not believed to pose a significant hazard to life, but some areas along major creeks and near the confluence of creeks are subject to inundation by a flood with a one percent chance of occurring in any year (100 year flood), and smaller more frequent floods. Flood control and drainage works are

constructed by land developers and by the County Flood Control District in certain areas according to the District's adopted plan of improvements. Outside of Flood Zone 3-B, the Walnut Creek Basin including San Ramon Creek and its tributaries, there are no established Flood Zones, adopted plans or property tax revenues for flood control works. Projects proposed for outlying areas will be provided with adequate drainage by the land developer, but it should also be recognized that off-site flooding can be made worse by development in the watershed. All possible efforts should be made to avoid off-site flooding where there is no public mechanism to construct flood control improvements in the downstream area.

The roofs and pavement of development add to the volume of water reaching creeks. This increased runoff from developed areas causes high flood peaks to occur in creeks, so that any measures used in land development to retard runoff from the land will tend to protect these creeks from flooding and bank failure, particularly from smaller, more frequent floods. Check dams along upper creek channels can protect downstream areas, and features on the land itself—temporary impoundment basins, permeable areas, and heavy vegetation—can mitigate the volume and velocity of surface runoff. Site design and development plans are encouraged to incorporate these and other flow-retarding features in order to preserve natural waterways and prevent flooding.

New buildings in areas which have been identified as Flood Hazard Areas by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are required to have flood insurance under the provisions of the National Flood Insurance Program. Existing buildings may be insured voluntarily. Flood hazard areas identified by HUD and the County are required to have reasonable protection from flooding at least to minimum Federal standards. Existing development in low lying areas will remain subject to occasional flood inconvenience and potential minor to moderate property damages.

Creek Bank Failure Property damages have occurred where creek banks fail. Setting buildings back from the top of the bank is the best method of preventing damages to structures and will also avoid demands for natural waterways to be engineered where bank failure rather than general flooding is the problem. A rule-of-thumb guide for property safety is to require a minimum creek setback equal to 1.5 times the depth of the channel, as is frequently recommended by the County Flood Control District. A creek setback ordinance should be considered as the most effective means of ensuring property safety. In the absence of the ordinance, the recommendation of the Flood Control District should be a condition of project approval.

Wells and Septic Systems Continued development on wells and septic systems may endanger domestic water supplies in two ways. The shallow low yield aquifers characteristic of the Planning Area are subject to overdrafts if too many wells are drilled. Because these wells are shallow they may also be subject to contamination by sewage effluents. These problems are most likely to occur as a result of low density residential development in outlying valleys. One serious implication of residential development in outlying areas is the inadequacy of the domestic water supply to service continued development as well as serve the agricultural needs. Residential uses in these areas should be discouraged if they would jeopardize agricultural use. It is not possible to predict at precisely what point the risk of contamination or dry wells

becomes an unacceptable risk, since very little is known about the capabilities of the aquifers, but consideration of lot splits and residential development in areas which must rely on wells and septic systems should include an evaluation of this potential hazard.

Wildfire Wildfire is a hazard to life and property in the Planning Area during the summer and fall dry season. Since virtually all wildfires are caused by people, accessibility to dry vegetation is an important factor in fire risks. Parks and unirrigated lands associated with residential development are highly subject to wildfire. Dry grass is easily ignited but is relatively easily controlled. Fires in dry brush and woods burn hot and spread fast. Hillsides, windy ridge tops and canyon draws also spread fire rapidly. Homes in fire-prone areas are sometimes difficult to reach with fire equipment and many have little available on-site water for fire fighting. These homes should be constructed with fire resistant materials and should have irrigated surroundings.

New subdivisions which are proposed to include natural unirrigated vegetation and which would be located in outlying areas where fire could spread to adjacent agricultural or park lands, should be reviewed to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are provided. The responsibility for fire prevention, weed abatement and other maintenance programs must be clear.

Soil Erosion Surface soil erosion as a result of steepening slopes and exposing soil to rainfall damages the property upon which it occurs and also adds to the risk of downstream flooding, sedimentation and stream bank failure. The steeper the slope the greater the erosion rate. Graded land should be revegetated as quickly as possible with emphasis on adequate covering of the 50 percent fill slopes created by conventional pad grading. Special measures to prevent soil erosion may be required on properties where horses or other livestock are confined to small paddocks or pastures, which they trample thus exposing soil. Small paddocks on steep hillsides are particularly prone to erode and cause on-site and off-site damages. The permitted size of horse set-ups should reflect topography and erosion hazards, with the minimum one acre lot considered suitable for only level land and very gently sloping areas. The size of lots in Country Estates areas and any other areas where lot size would permit keeping livestock should be reviewed to insure that lot size reflects topography and erosion hazards.

Noise The countywide Noise Element, adopted by the Board of Supervisors on September 16, 1975, gives the basic policy guidance for transportation noise problems in the County. This Plan incorporated the countywide element by reference.

The Noise element is intended to add considerations of noise and noise-related problems to the General Plan and to ensure their consideration in planning processes and activities. While noise is generated by many sources, the main focus of the element is on transportation noise.

In addition to providing noise goals and standards, the element provides the basic tools to control excessive noise for all residential structures except detached single family homes.

The element establishes 1990 noise contour maps which are estimates of noise levels at specified distances from major roads in the Planning Area. These noise contours provide the basis for administering the State Department of Housing and Community Development guidelines establishing maximum allowable noise levels for all residential structures exclusive of detached single family homes. Provisions of the State Administrative Code require that all new attached single family units, apartments, hotels, and motels to be located in areas that exceed the standards embodied in the contour maps must have acoustical studies made to insure that noise levels inside new structures will not exceed the established standards. Acoustical studies are also required for non-residential projects which cause residential noise levels to exceed the standard.

The purpose of the noise study, conducted at the expense of the applicant, is to ensure that new structures will not exceed interior noise equivalents of 45 dBA based on the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) scale with the windows closed. The acoustical analysis reports must be prepared under the supervision of a person experienced in the field of acoustical science and must be submitted with the application for a building permit. Thus the Noise Element provides an added level of protection to residents of new developments to ensure that exterior noise will not result in excessive inside noise levels.

Community Facilities Community facilities include public utilities, public educational, cultural, and recreational developments, land and buildings used for public protection services, County Service Areas for street lighting and other special local needs, and drainage works. All of these must be adequate so that residents may enjoy a safe, healthful, efficient and stimulating environment. Every community must have a water supply, sewers, utilities, schools, and other community facilities. Each of these facilities, however, has an ultimate capacity. Requirements for community facilities and services increase as the urban area expands. Populations grow, old facilities become outmoded or do not have adequate capacity, and living standards and public expectations rise. Some community facilities of the Valley are at or near capacity and may be strained to provide high-quality service to Valley residents at a reasonable cost. It is important to establish the need, general location and timing of facilities for future development so that new areas will be provided with facilities to an extent equal to that considered satisfactory for the entire Planning Area without excessive costs to existing residents or a deterioration of services to the entire community. This implies that planning for the location and timing of new developments must be closely coordinated with planning for the location and timing of new schools, utility lines, flood control works, and public protection services so that all the essentials of a satisfactory community can proceed in an orderly and economical way.

The distribution and appearance of public facilities is an important consideration in this Plan. Sites for utilities and public facilities must be related to present and future land use plans and must be harmonious with the immediate surroundings, since many schools, parks, recreation and cultural centers, fire stations and power substations are set in residential locations and are highly visible by reason of a prominent central location. In order to maintain the environmental and scenic quality of the area, public

features must respect the considerations stated in this Plan. Major drainage works, for example, should include environmental protection to the greatest possible extent.

Multiple use of facilities is a concept which is widely supported in the community because it is a more efficient use of tax revenues. Schools, parks and recreation and cultural centers are the most frequently found multiple use facilities, but serious efforts are worthwhile to achieve others, including trails and drainage works, outdoor recreation and utility rights-of-way, and commercial areas and scenic landmarks. All future facilities should be reviewed to determine to what extent they are suitable for multiple public uses. In some areas trails are planned along stream channels; these natural linear elements are in many respects ideal for hiking and riding. Trails may be provided by developers or the Flood Control District in association with their projects. Maintenance districts can be formed as required to ensure proper upkeep of these public trails.

Schools The provision of school facilities and their proper utilization is a continuing problem faced by school districts in every part of the County. Schools rank among the facilities most directly affected by local changes in land use and development. Schools, however, also affect the development of their districts. It is well known that the quality and scope of district educational programs are significant in determining the attractiveness of an area for both residential and "economic" activities (those that produce jobs and add to the tax base). School costs also affect an area's attractiveness. In short, school needs and comprehensive planning are very closely related. Their well-being is important to the well-being of the community.

Public education in the Planning Area is the primary responsibility of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. The district was formed in 1965 by combining the three existing elementary school districts (Alamo, Danville, and San Ramon) with the San Ramon Valley High School District. At the end of 1975 the San Ramon Valley Unified School District operated eleven elementary schools, two intermediate schools, and four high schools, including a continuation school.

The San Ramon Valley Unified School District also plays a role in the community beyond its educational function. As the only local public entity to embrace most of the Planning Area, the district provides facilities and programs which otherwise would not be available to residents. The old Danville School is used as a community center, and school facilities and district planning are significant components of the area's recreational system.

A second jurisdiction, the Amador Valley Joint Union School District, serves a small portion of the County with facilities in Dublin and Pleasanton. Approximately ten students are bused from this area to Fairlanes Elementary School, Harvest Park Middle School, and Amador and Foothill High Schools in Alameda County.

Two additional school districts which serve parts of the Planning Area are the Walnut Creek School District and the Livermore Valley School District. The Walnut Creek School District serves a small section of the northwestern tip of the study area north of Chaney Road. Children in this area attend either Muirwood or Tice Valley Elemen-

tary Schools, both located outside the Planning Area. Del Valle and Las Lomas High Schools (Acalanes Union High School District) serve the Planning Area and are located on its periphery.

Although a portion of the Planning Area is contained in the Livermore Valley School District, no students currently attend district schools from the Planning Area.

Since most of the Planning Area is within the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, and it is the district with the greatest need for new facilities, the following policies focus on this Plan's support of the school district.

The proposed land uses shown on the Plan will assist the school district in providing needed facilities. The Plan contains four major policies to this end:

1. It is recognized that the state standards listed below are minimum standards necessary for the well-being of the school district and the community.

State School Standards For Number of Students Per Class

Grade	Number of Students
Kindergarten	27
1-3	29
4-6	30
7-8	30
9-12	28
Laboratory Classes in Grades 9-12	24

State School Standards for Space Allocation Per Student

Grade	Square Feet Per Student
Kindergarten-6	55
7-8	75
9-12	85

2. This Plan supports the general concept of a special fee or charge on new residential units until facilities adequate by State standards can be provided.
3. Since community well-being is tied to maintaining an adequate school system, this Plan endorses the policy of keeping the school system above State minimum standards on a district wide basis.
4. Every effort should be made to implement these policies through zoning restrictions, or in some cases restraints on development or other mechanisms, and to work with the San Ramon Valley Unified School District until adequate facilities can be provided.

These four policies are short term in nature and allow the school district flexibility to seek solutions to its problems in concert with this Plan. In the long run solutions to the problems of school finance in developing communities require the assistance of the State Legislature.

Libraries The library located in Danville is part of the Contra Costa County Library System. Library facilities in Dublin (Alameda County Library System) and Walnut Creek also provide library service to area residents. In addition to the above branch libraries, each school in the Planning Area maintains a student library. The library facility in Danville is considered inadequate by the County to serve the population to the year 1990, and construction of adequate library facilities to serve the expanding population will be encouraged.

Public Protection Facilities The protection of lives and property from fire and crime is an essential service which requires public facilities and funds. In the Planning Area these functions are carried out by fire departments, the County Sheriff's Department, and the California Highway Patrol. Additional information on public safety is found in the Safety Element of the County General Plan.

Fire protection is provided by five agencies. The Danville and San Ramon Fire Protection Districts and the Valley Community Services District serve the Valley with professional staff from five fire stations. The eastern rural area is served by volunteer firemen from four stations in the Tassajara Fire Protection District. The north Alamo area lies in the Contra Costa County Consolidated Fire Protection District whose nearest stations are outside the Planning Area. All fire agencies are equipped to extinguish both wildfire and structural fires. Fire services are adequate at present, but an increased population with its increased fire prevention needs, will lead to additional facility requirements. A study of consolidation might indicate most efficient methods of providing service and utilizing equipment and facilities.

Utilities Water is provided by the East Bay Municipal Utility District and private wells. Sewage treatment is provided by the Valley Community Services District in the lower San Ramon area, and by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District in the northern developed areas. Consolidation of the entire Valley into one sewerage district may prove to be a means of ensuring adequate facilities for the growth areas designated in this Plan.

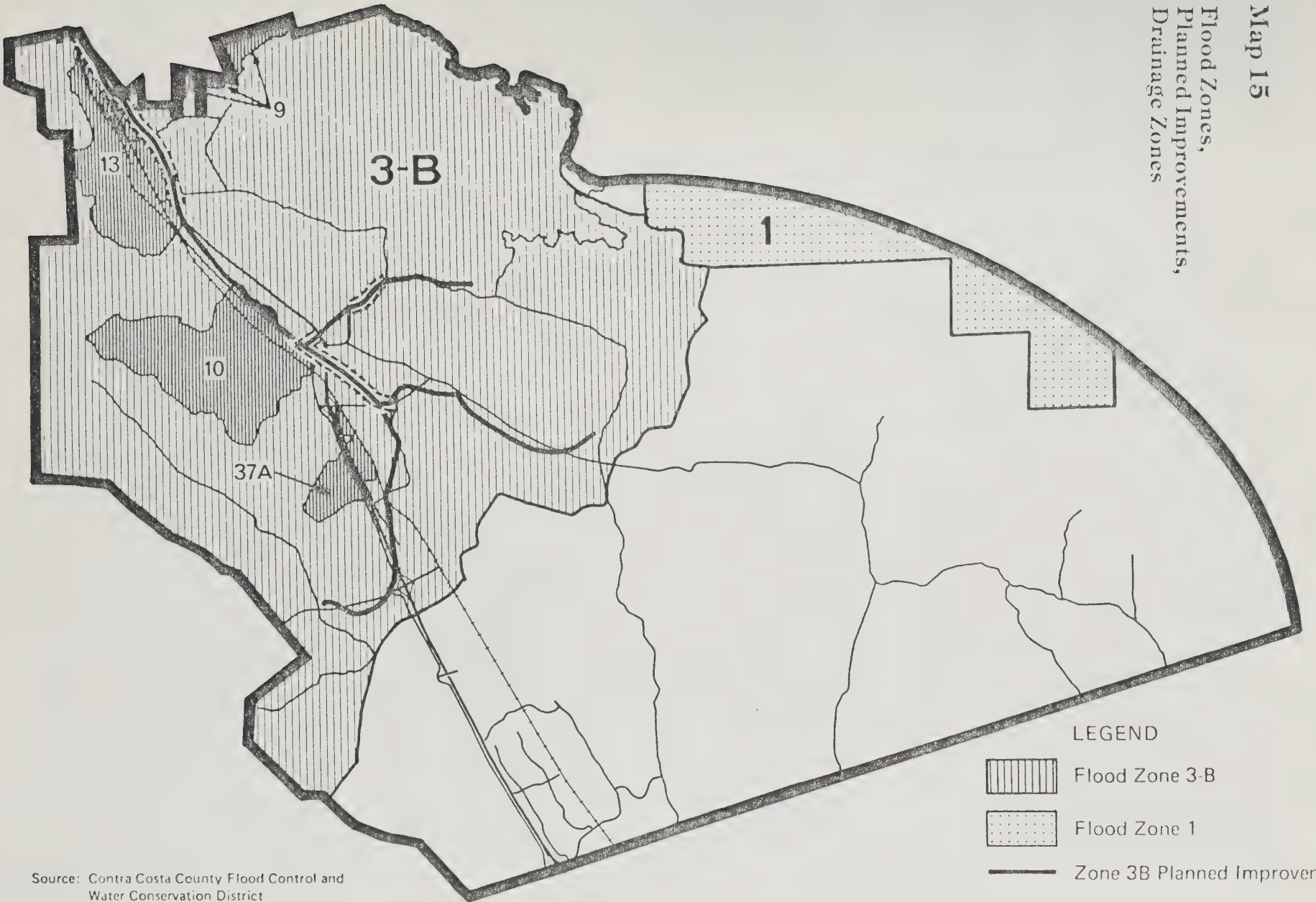
The coordination of utility facilities and service areas with growth is necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of this Plan. Undersized facilities are costly to replace, but oversized facilities or overly large service areas are also costly and can lead to pressures for growth which are inconsistent with this Plan. Utility planning and community development planning must go hand-in-hand. The avoidance of leap-frog development, a basic policy for outlying Special Concern Areas, is a major means of ensuring adequate and economic provision of utilities.

Flood Control and Drainage Works Watershed development in naturally flood prone areas and along creeks risks flood damages to property. Flood control and drainage works are costly but essential community facilities in urban and suburban areas.

Most of the Planning Area is not subject to severe flooding, but certain areas have been identified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as Flood Hazard Areas subject to inundation by the one-percent-risk flood and are subject to the provisions of the National Insurance Program. Flood Control projects are

Map 15

Flood Zones,
Planned Improvements,
Drainage Zones



LEGEND



Flood Zone 3-B



Flood Zone 1



Zone 3B Planned Improvements



Drainage Zones



Completed Improvements

Source: Contra Costa County Flood Control and
Water Conservation District

constructed by the County Flood Control District to County ordinance standards of two percent-flood-risk protection (50 year flood) on major streams, and four percent-flood-risk protection (25 year flood) on minor streams. Drainage works constructed by developers for major subdivisions and commercial and industrial projects are designed to the requirements of the Flood Control District. Drainage works in areas which develop by the lot-split method, rather than as large development projects, are not required to satisfy the higher standards required by the Flood Control District for major subdivisions. Where these neighborhoods lie on the Valley floor, drainage may prove to be inadequate to carry the larger runoff from subsequent development in the upper watershed. Drainage improvements and flood control projects are often constructed after development takes place and flood problems are evident. This makes it extremely difficult to design projects which will provide the required flood protection and retain natural stream channels and vegetation. Two Storm Drainage Zones have been formed to improve drainage, one in Alamo and one northwest of downtown Danville. Other areas may require improvements by special assessment districts when impacted by subsequent watershed development.

Flood Control works are constructed according to adopted plans for Flood Zones created on a watershed basis and are paid for out of property tax revenues in each Flood Zone. Drainage improvements are paid for by additional property tax revenues from Storm Drainage Zones formed by the Flood Control District for that purpose. San Ramon Creek and its tributaries are part of Flood Zone 3-B, the Walnut Creek Basin. Existing and planned flood control works in the Planning Area are shown on Map 15. No improvements by the County Flood Control District are planned in the southern and eastern Planning Area, part of the Alameda Creek Basin, since it is not in a Flood Zone and property tax revenues are not being accumulated.

Development in areas where there is no provision for public flood control and drainage projects should be reviewed with regard for downstream drainage impacts, and means should be devised to avoid adverse impacts. Off-site impacts of watershed development, within as well as outside Flood Zones, should be assessed in order to avoid degradation to natural streams and to avoid unnecessary flood damage risks. Public costs for flood control and drainage works may also be reduced by requiring newly developing areas to mitigate the downstream impacts of development-induced runoff. Innovative means of reducing surface runoff, such as ponds and check dams, are encouraged by this Plan and are consistent with its conservation objectives.

Community Design There is a unified interest throughout the Planning Area in preserving the scenic beauty of the bordering hills. Many residents also have a strong attachment to tree-lined rural roads and homes set well back from the road. The first objective is provided for by the Open Space and Conservation Elements, but the second objective, rural roads typical of older Alamo and Danville neighborhoods, may not be realistic in today's major subdivision developments which require fully paved roads with curbs and side walks, storm drains, and access for fire equipment. The suburban streets do not have the rural charm of the narrow roads bordered by ditches. Short cul-de-sac streets and other very low volume streets should be reviewed for the possibility of minimizing or doing away with design requirements, where this would not hamper accessibility for emergency equipment and where public maintenance costs would not be greater than for conventional design.

A third design objective for the entire area is the prevalence of the single family detached home. This is preferred to such an extent that even where clustering is considered suitable it is usually recommended to be clustered detached housing. Townhouses and multiple family units are acceptable close to shopping districts and as a transition from commercial to single family residential uses, but to be acceptable in present or future low density residential areas such housing units will be required to have an appearance very similar to single family detached homes.

The Planned Unit Development (P-1) Zoning provides flexibility in site planning for projects of fifteen acres or more. These advantages should be made available to smaller projects as well in order to enable smaller areas, especially these which would be in-filling in already developed areas, to provide the maximum amenities, save significant trees, avoid difficult topography, and prevent monotony in residential neighborhoods. It will be difficult to achieve the concepts of the Special Concern Areas without flexibility in site design for smaller parcels.

The development of residential parcels by the lot-split minor subdivision process is more difficult to control and provide with design guidance than the conventional major subdivision. To achieve community design goals, the initial minor subdivision of a property should reflect appropriate final future property boundaries and road locations. The Environmental Impact Report for lot-split actions should discuss the final property boundary implications of the proposed minor subdivision. In some instances it may be advisable to prepare a Specific Plan to guide subsequent lot-split actions, which would provide land purchasers and developers with an evaluation of the ultimate development in the area.

In addition to objectives for the Planning Area as a whole, the three communities of Alamo, Danville, and San Ramon require the preservation of their separate identities. This can be achieved through well defined entry points and preservation of local landmarks, either as public projects or through the design of new developments.

The shopping areas of Alamo and Danville differ in size, but both require some improvement of their visual characteristics to reflect design goals of village-like scale and details considered compatible with community images. This can be achieved by architectural review and by solving visual design problems along with circulation problems. Guidelines for the design of commercial districts should be established to provide a desirable environment in keeping with community design values, and could include guidelines for height, surface materials, colors, signs, and other features significant to the community. Landscaping should be used, where possible, to provide a buffer between residential and non-residential uses.

Neighborhoods surrounded by walls, which shut them off visually from the community and suggest an attitude of social isolation, are not considered desirable. However, as larger arterial roads are constructed there may be more developments laid out with back yards on the road. In such cases the wall does protect the privacy of residents and its harsh appearance can be softened by landscaping and trails. In other situations walls along roads should be avoided as much as possible.

Continuous rapid development, as in the Planning Area over the last two decades, causes substantial changes in the appearance of rural and semi-rural areas. Wider roads take out front yards and mature oaks, orchards are converted into subdivisions, and one's sense of intimate contact with nature changes to the usual suburbanite frustrations over school and road congestion. Most of these "costs" cannot be avoided entirely, but with constant attention to community design and important community values the future community can have attractive and livable characteristics. A first and essential step is to identify important design values in a Plan. This should be followed by close attention to detail in the design of public and private projects. In some cases a historic tree, a stream or a special view may be preserved, in other cases a handsome appearance will be built into projects with the visual benefits perhaps delayed until trees can grow or grading can be obscured. Proposals for public facilities which would require the removal of groves of trees or other scenic landmarks should be accompanied by plans and costs for alternatives, so that the community can have a choice in project location and design. Project reviews and Environmental Impact Reports should bring design details to the attention of the Planning Commission and the public. Community identity within the Planning Area can be achieved by judicious application of the zoning ordinance and by requiring excellence in project design.

Implementation

The text of the Plan provides the goals and policy framework which are the substance of the Plan. Implementation means are discussed in the text and are brought together here to focus attention on needed regulations and programs required to fulfill the expressed desires of the community as stated in the Plan.

This section discusses four types of actions: Specific policies or ordinances which should be considered for adoption, additional studies which should be undertaken in the immediate future, and additional recommendations worthy of consideration which reflect community needs but are not directly related to actions of the County Planning Agency.

Policies or Ordinances

Several ordinances are in process of development by the County or are needed to help implement the policies of this General Plan. While there may be other ordinances which will work toward Plan implementation, the following are deemed the most essential in achieving Plan goals and objectives.

Plan Review

The large number of variables which will affect the actual extent and location of the future development of the Planning Area include market conditions, the general economy, public funding capabilities, and regional, state and federal environmental regulations. In these times of rapid change a plan intended to cover a period of fifteen years cannot respond to unknown factors but can point out, as this Plan does, conditions which may outdate the General Plan in a few years. The General Plan should be, therefore, reviewed on a regular basis at intervals of not more than five years.

Slope Density

This General Plan has focused on two policies relating to the hills; first, that density should decrease as slope increases, and secondly, that major ridgelines should be protected. The adoption of a slope density ordinance or policy would strengthen this Plan.

Scenic Routes

The protection of scenic values adjacent to roads designated on the Scenic Routes Element of the General Plan has been of concern to Valley residents for some time. Ordinances to reinforce the scenic qualities adjacent to adopted scenic routes, and to ensure that development of land or other projects be done in a manner which maintains or enhances existing scenic qualities, should be prepared.

Site Plan Flexibility

In order to provide the degree of site plan flexibility established in the Plan, a Planned Unit Development concept should be extended to include parcels smaller than the fifteen acre minimum now acceptable in P-1 zoning. Therefore, a new zoning district should be developed to include smaller parcels and to provide both flexibility and innovation in site design which fully reflects the land use plan, other General Plan elements, and the prevailing existing development densities in the immediate area. This will supplement the P-1 district for parcels too small to be allowed under the present P-1 district.

Creek Setback

Property damages from creek bank failure can be prevented by requiring buildings to be set back from the bank top. This would also avoid demands from affected property owners for improvement projects to be constructed by the

Flood Control District in areas which are not suffering actual flood damages. Where drainage is inadequate, creek setbacks also provide some flood protection. If channel improvements are required at some future time, creek setbacks make it more feasible to construct projects which are not environmentally damaging. A creek setback ordinance should be considered in the public interest as well as for providing protection for creekside property.

Open Space Easements The Open Space Easement Act enacted by the California Legislature in 1974 enables cities and counties to accept Open Space Easements as a means of maintaining lands in open space uses. Open space easement restrictions are binding upon the landowner, and all subsequent owners or lease holders, for the period of the contract. An Open Space Easement need not provide for public access to the land involved, but may only restrict rights to develop the land. The landowner receives property tax relief in exchange for giving an Open Space Easement to the County. The County should proceed to develop an Open Space Easement program.

Sign Control Signs in the San Ramon Valley are regulated by the general provisions of the County ordinance. However, other areas of the County have sign control regulations more stringent than those applied within the Valley. As controls are provided through sign combining districts, the existing sign combining districts should be reviewed to determine their applicability to the Valley and to determine if such districts should be developed to meet the specific needs of the Planning Area.

Deed Restrictions Continued attempts by some property owners to subdivide large lots into small lots are of concern to the community because of their potential impact on roads and facilities. This is especially true for development created as large lots and through the minor subdivision process. It is desirable to establish a policy, through deed restrictions or restrictive covenants, to eliminate the potential for increasing the total number of housing units caused by subsequent lot splits in developed areas. Where a developer or subdivider agrees that a lot layout creates the maximum number of units acceptable, subsequent restrictions should become a standard condition of approval for the subdivision of land in that area. This tool should be used when the existing roads and services are sized to handle only the buildout proposed by the subdivider.

Zoning – General Plan Consistency Certain zoning-General Plan inconsistencies exist in the Planning Area. A program of rezoning will be initiated by the Planning Commission to bring about compliance between the Plan and zoning.

Additional Studies When this Plan was prepared it became evident that certain additional studies should be considered in a planning context even though they are beyond the scope of this document:

Urban Design Studies Incremental project-by-project development has resulted in major commercial areas within the Planning Area without visual continuity. This mode of development has also caused problems of poor circulation, inadequate and poorly placed parking facilities, and poor visual quality.

Detailed urban design studies should be initiated based upon the General Plan designations and policies of this element. Studies should lead to improved circulation patterns and to proposals for integrating the design of future projects in these commercial areas into attractive business districts.

Agriculture Viability Agricultural land is subject to the same tax rates applied to non-agricultural land. Urban encroachment into agricultural district adversely affects necessary agricultural activities. This Plan supports the concept of de-annexing agricultural land from urban service districts, where the districts do not provide the service intended. The use of the Agricultural Preserve Program is encouraged. Further studies and programs need to be undertaken to protect agriculture as an important part of the County's economy, and new means of preventing urbanization from impacting agriculture should be developed.

Additional Recommendations There are several other concerns and potentials which should be considered for action as an aid in implementation of this Plan. These items should be given further review by the community and acted upon within the next few years.

Air Pollution The rate of development in the San Ramon Valley and in the adjacent Livermore-Amador basin has serious implications for air quality, particularly for its effects on human health and agriculture. Air quality is becoming an important factor in the growth potential of an area, yet there is no direct way the citizens of a community can reduce emissions from stationary or moving sources within their community. Results of air pollution studies by the Bay Air Pollution Control District, in cooperation with the County, may lead to modifications of this Plan.

Energy Conservation This Plan recognizes that the nation faces a long term energy problem, and it contains several recommendations relating to energy use. The most significant recommendation is an effort to minimize sprawl. It is hoped that future energy constraints and technologies can be accommodated within the policies of this Plan but, because the national energy future cannot be predicted at this time, it is recognized that continued development or the Plan itself may be modified by national energy consumption policies.

Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning Several natural hazards affect the Planning Area as discussed in the Safety and Seismic Safety Elements of this Plan. If a general or large scale disaster were to occur from any cause, an immediate study should be initiated to see if modifications to the General Plan are warranted.

Recreation and Parks All four agencies which provide parks in the Planning Area are currently involved in land acquisition which implement this Plan. This Plan provides generalized locations for public park and recreation facilities; exact locations of future parklands will depend upon the acquisition programs of park agencies. This Plan should be amended periodically to reflect actual park sites as they are acquired.

Alquist-Priolo Act Seismic Hazard Zones The State Legislature requires adequate geological investigations for all development projects located within seismic hazard zones. As a result of these studies, modifications may be made in project

design which provide new planning opportunities, especially in terms of trails throughout the community. The Trail Plan should maintain flexibility to respond to these alternatives.

Transit This Plan supports the provision of public transit as an alternative mode of travel in the Valley and recognizes that the existing transit service needs to be augmented to become an effective alternative to the automobile, especially for service and work trips.

Fire Protection Services The Planning Area is currently served by four separate agencies which provide fire protection services, two of which utilize some volunteer firemen. The cost for fire protection varies considerably. As development continues in a fire service area, full conversion to paid staff will become necessary. It is desirable to restudy the advantages of consolidating fire services in this area to determine if consolidation would provide a high level of service at a reasonable or reduced cost.

Contra Costa Community College District The Contra Costa Community College District Master Plan shows the San Ramon Valley as a site for a fourth campus. It is hoped that the district will provide a full facility to the Valley but, if the District does not build a full campus, some provision should be made to increase community college facilities to serve Valley residents.

Camp Parks Camp Parks is shown for public-semi public use on this Plan. Currently this site is used by the National Guard. If this property is determined to be excess government land, consideration should be given to two future uses of this land; one being the expansion of the Camp Parks Regional Recreation Area into Contra Costa County and the second being establishment of a veterans cemetery on a portion of this facility. In any event, this land should remain in public use.

prepared by the
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

under the direction of
ANTHONY A. DEHAESUS, Director of Planning

participating staff members were as follows:
JAMES W. CUTLER, Project Planner
M. KATHERINE ROBINSON, Environmental Design Planner
ROBERT G. KOPERSKI, Graphic Designer

SAN RAMON VALLEY AREA
GENERAL PLAN
ADDENDUM

March, 1983

<u>AMENDMENT</u>	<u>ADOPTED</u>
Blackhawk Ranch Commercial Area	1979
Crow Canyon - S.P.	1979
West El Pintado - Ilo Lane Area	1979
Sycamore Specific Plan	1979
Alcosta Boulevard Area	1980
Town and Country Drive Area	1980
Sycamore Valley	1981
Crow Canyon Road Area	1981
Kimball Avenue	1982
Bollinger Canyon Road	1982
North Dougherty Hills	1982

BLACKHAWK RANCH COMMERCIAL AREA LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT

Introduction

This amendment to the Land Use Element of County General Plan covers the shifting of a commercial center within the Blackhawk Ranch project southerly along Blackhawk Road in the San Ramon Valley area. This amendment is in response to an individual request for a general plan change to better locate the planned commercial areas.

Land Use Element

The existing County General Plan shows a Commercial designation located on the southwest side of Blackhawk Road covering a 47-acre area. This designation will be changed to Low Density Single Family Residential. The existing County General Plan shows Low Density Single Family Residential at the northeast intersection of a realligned Blackhawk Road at Camino Tassajara; this designation will be changed to show a designation of approximately 20 acres of Commercial.

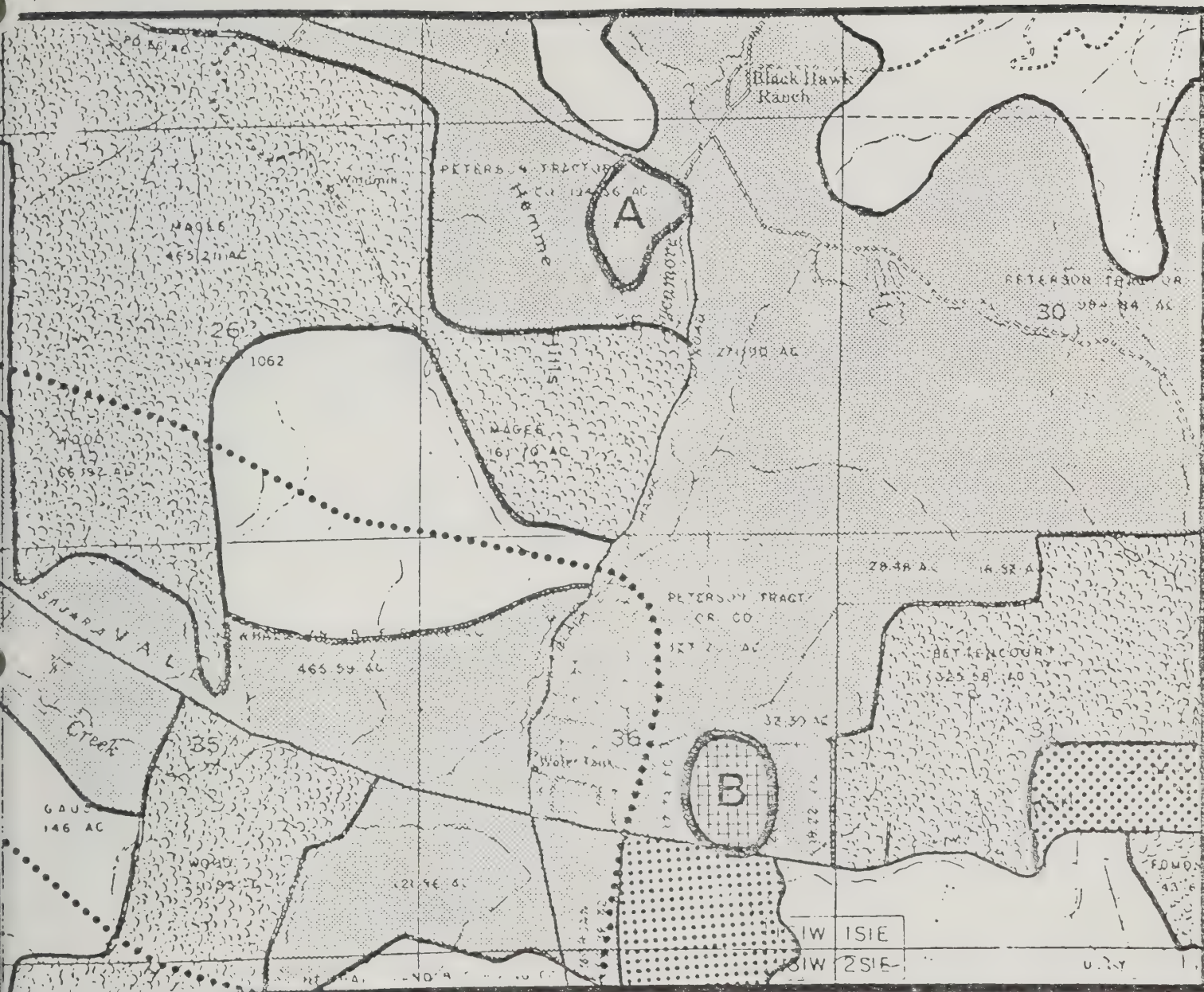
This amendment reflects the fact that the Blackhawk Ranch project is focusing development further away from Mt. Diablo State Park and that shifting of this commercial designation will conform with that change in the project.

Only the land use element of the County General Plan is modified by this amendment.

The amendment is reflected on the attached map.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

BLACKHAWK RANCH AREA



LEGEND

Land Use Categories



Single Family Low-Density Residential

Country Estates

Commercial

General Open Space

Agricultural Preserve

--- Special Concern Area Boundary

Scale: 1" = 2000'



A- Area A is amended from Commercial to Single Family Low-Density Residential

B- Area B is amended from Single Family Low-Density Residential to Commercial

14-14-1 3

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

CROW CANYON - S.P. AMENDMENT

This amendment to the Land Use Element of the County General Plan covers an area of approximately thirty acres located west of El Capitan Drive, north of Crow Canyon Road, and east of the Southern Pacific Railroad and P.G.&E. Research Facility. The amendment was initiated in response to a request for a change in the General Plan designations from "Controlled Manufacturing" and "Single Family Residential - Medium Density" to "Multiple Family Residential - Very Low Density".

The amendment clarifies a General Plan boundary between industrial use to the west and developed and developing residential lands to the east and north. This amendment will allow low density multiple family use to serve as a transition use between two developed areas. The boundaries of the single family areas will be clarified by the amendment.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Change the designation from "Controlled Manufacturing" and "Single Family Residential - Medium Density" to "Multiple Family Residential - Very Low Density" for 27 acres of land and to Single Family Residential - Medium Density for three acres of land as shown on the attached map.

The definition of these land use categories are:

Medium Density Single Family Residential. 3 to 5 units per net acre.

The Medium Density Single Family Residential designation allows for flexibility in project design with a permissible range of 3 to 5 units per net acres. Development in these areas should be encouraged at an overall mid-ranch average of four units per net acre. This density provides a large lot for family living with room for gardens and pets, and is expected to lead to neighborhoods which are attractive to suburban families. Medium density areas are located reasonable (sic) close to shopping, arterials, commuter routes, and facilities, so the greater traffic generated from these more intensively developed areas will not severely impact traffic on rural roads in outlying areas.

Very Low Density Multiple Family. 4 to 7 units per net acre.

The Very Low Density Multiple Family dwelling category was developed for the 1971 San Ramon Area Plan to provide for clustering of single family dwellings. Designation for multiple family use does not prevent clustering of detached units, but does provide a measure of flexibility for efficient use of land. Luxury townhouses with many outdoor and recreational amenities can be anticipated in this category. The County Zoning Ordinance reflects this General Plan category in two compatible multiple zoning categories; M-5 and M-6, which allow up to 4.5 and 6.8 units per net acre respectively.

JWC:mb/sj
12/12/78
12/14/78

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT CROW CANYON - S.P. AMENDMENT



GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

WEST EL PINTADO - ILO LANE AREA
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

INTRODUCTION

This amendment to the Land Use Element of the County General Plan covers an area of approximately 6 acres which fronts on the west side of West El Pintado from a point approximately 200' north of the Ilo Lane intersection to a point approximately 400' south of the same intersection.

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

This amendment would change the General Plan land use designation of approximately 6.35 acres fronting the west side of West El Pintado in the vicinity of the Ilo Lane intersection. The remainder of the area would remain in the present land use designations.

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE CATEGORY

The land use category referred to in this amendment is defined below.

Multiple Family Residential-Low Density

Low Density Multiple Family areas provide for a higher density still compatible with the suburban life style. This designation allows densities ranging from 7 to 12 units per net acre with an average of 9.5 units per net acre. The upper range is the maximum practicable for townhouse development. The emphasis here is on convenient location, transition from residential to business use, and a suburban atmosphere through landscaped open areas.

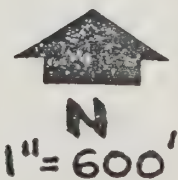
G.C.C.P.D.



GENERAL PLAN MAP

LEGEND

- Single Family Residential - Low Density
- Single Family Residential - Medium Density
- Multiple Family Residential - Low Density
- Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density
- Commercial
- Limited Office
- Public/Semi-Public
- Amendment Area



- Uses permitted in the center must conform to the size and scale of a specialty shopping center, featuring small shops and low traffic generating uses. Examples of the types of uses which are appropriate are small restaurants, financial offices, branch offices, jewelry, art, clothing, leather goods, delicatessen and furniture stores.
- Road improvements from Podva Road along San Ramon Valley Boulevard to Town and Country Drive will be needed if this development is to proceed.
- The commercial units are to be treated individually and the conditions of approval shall make the joining of individual commercial spaces into larger commercial units, in addition to restricting the types of uses allowed through an appropriate review mechanism, subject to the review and approval of the Director of Planning.
- The use of a Planned Unit Development zoning district is necessary to insure adequate project controls.

JWC:ag
12/6/78
4/12/79
5/29/79
5/31/79
6/1/79
7-23-79

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT SYCAMORE SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT

This amendment to the Land Use Element of the Contra Costa County General Plan covers the approximately twenty acre area previously identified in the County General Plan as the Sycamore Specific Plan Area, located west of the intersection of Sycamore Valley Blvd. and San Ramon Valley Blvd. A requirement of the Sycamore Specific Plan category of the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan is that prior to allowing specific land uses it would be necessary to adopt a general plan amendment for this area.

This amendment is based on the judgement that certain limited forms of commercial and office usage are appropriate to the amendment area, with the remainder being appropriate for low density single and multiple family uses. Because of the nature of the property and the need to regulate the development as a specialty shopping center, a unique general plan category has been created; its provisions are discussed below.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Change the land use designation from "Specific Plan Area" to "Low Density - Single Family Residential", "Very Low Density - Multiple Family", "Office/Service Commercial" and "Specialized Commercial."

The definition of these land use categories are:

Low Density - Single Family Residential. 1 to 3 units per acre. This allowable range provides flexibility in planning projects to reflect environmental problems and proximity to existing and proposed developments.

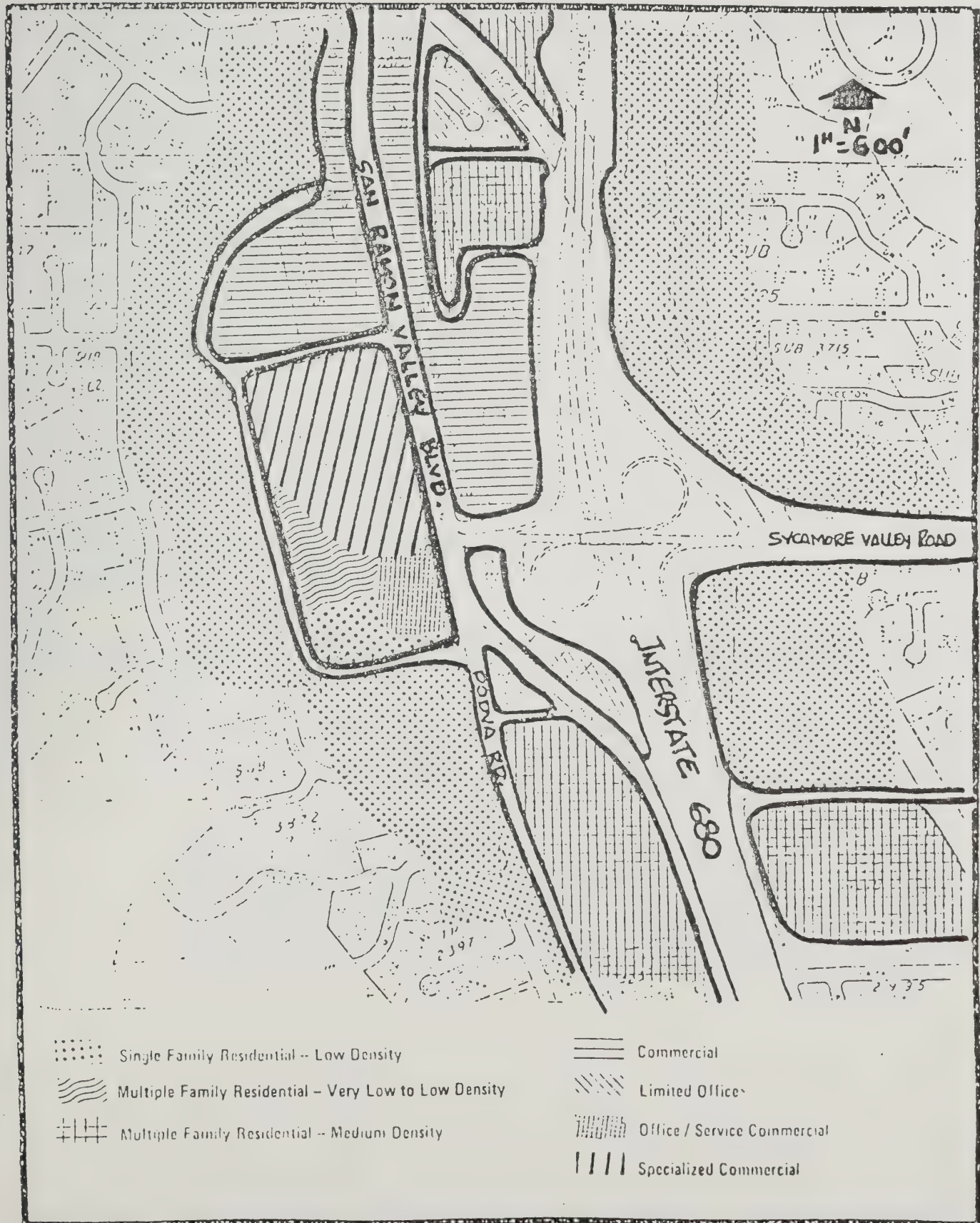
Very Low to Low Density Multiple Family. 4 to 12 units per net acre. The Low to Very Low Density Multiple Family dwelling category was developed for this Plan to provide for clustering of single family dwelling with the actual density of multiples to be decided within this range based on the development plan process for the site. Designation for multiple family use does not prevent clustering of detached units, but does provide a measure of flexibility for efficient use of land. Luxury townhouses can be anticipated in this category.

Office/Service Commercial. Office areas are located around the Crow Canyon-Interstate 680 interchange and in downtown Danville. The designation is intended to accommodate general office and service commercial uses (e.g., financial office, beauty shops, real estate offices or medical/dental facilities).

Specialized Commercial. This category allows for development of a specialty shopping center on approximately eleven acres adjacent to the Town and Country Shopping Center. The specialty shopping center must comply with the following criteria:

- A unified design shall be established for this project and the landscaping and other project amenities shall be maintained as a unit through establishment of an appropriate mechanism.

9



GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT
ALCOSTA DRIVE, SAN RAMON AREA
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

INTRODUCTION

This amendment to the County General Plan pertains to the Land Use Element. The amendment area is approximately 17 acres directly northeast of the intersection of Alcosta Boulevard and Norris Canyon Road in the unincorporated community of San Ramon which lies within the San Ramon Valley of Contra Costa County. The boundary of the amendment area is shown on the attached map.

This amendment originated in a request for a review of the General Plan in the subject location by the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission. The Commission wished to eliminate property designated Controlled Manufacturing at this site for fear of the disruptive impacts it might have on adjoining single family residences. Particulars on the evolution of the amendment, along with findings and analyses, are contained in a staff report dated March 6, 1980.

AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

This amendment changes the land use classification of the subject area from Controlled Manufacturing to the following classifications:

- Single Family Residential - Medium Density for the northeastern 2½ acres of the amendment area
- Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density for the remaining 15 acres of the amendment area.

The changes are shown on the attached amendment map.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

The initial study indicated that no significant environmental impacts would result from the General Plan Amendment; therefore, a Negative Declaration was prepared for the proposal.

LAND USE CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

The definition for the Land Use Element categories utilized in this amendment are as follows:

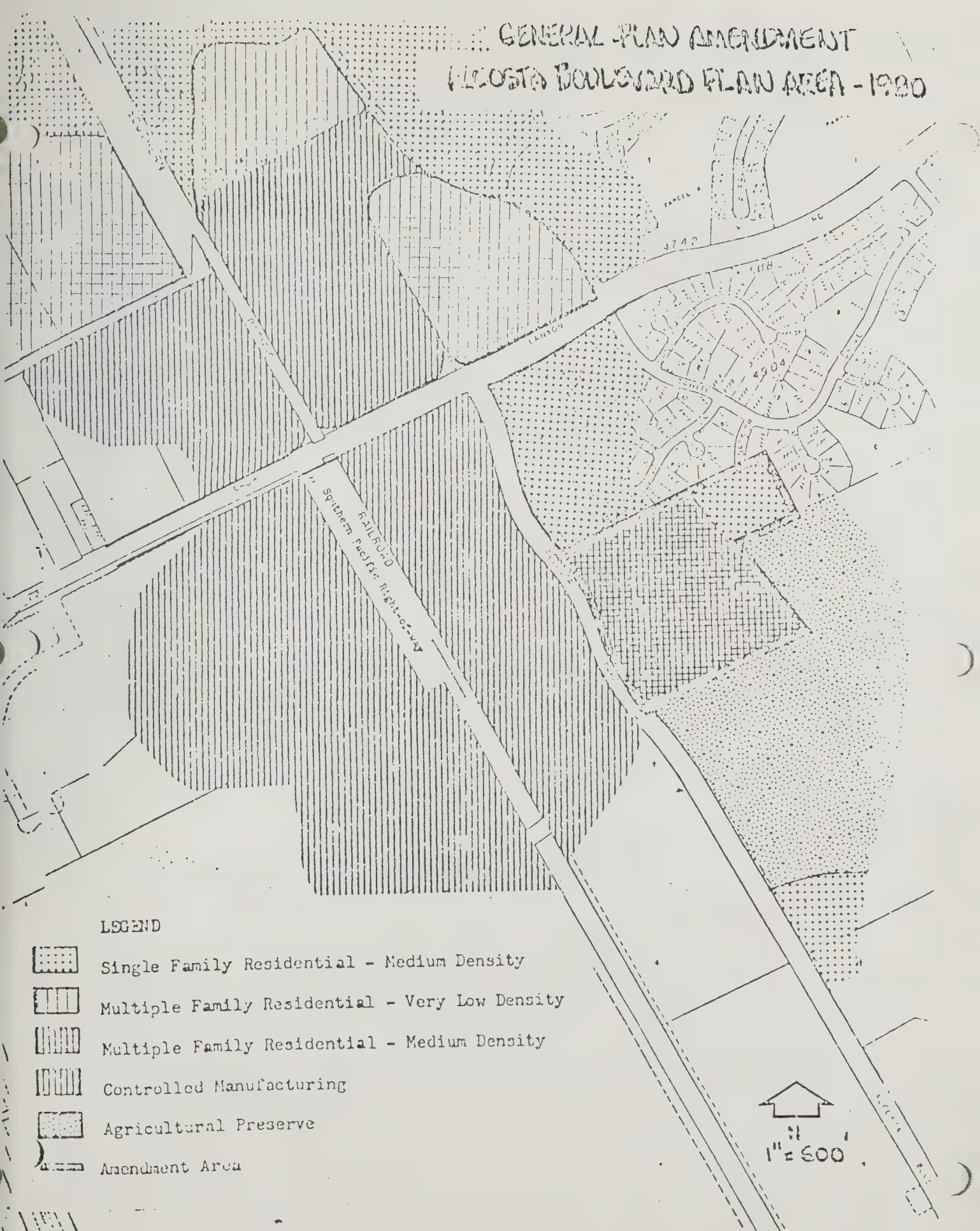
- Single Family Residential - Medium Density (3-5 units per net acre). The Medium Density Single Family Residential designation allows for flexibility in project design with a permissible range of 3 to 5 units per net acre. Development in the areas should be encouraged at an overall mid-range average of four units per net acre. This density provides a large lot for family living with room for gardens and pets and is expected to lead to

neighborhoods which are attractive to suburban families. Medium density areas are located reasonably close to shopping, arterials, commuter routes, and facilities, so the greater traffic generated from these more intensive developed areas will not severely impact traffic on rural roads in outlying areas.

- Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density (13-21 units per net acre). This range of densities for multiple units is intended to provide housing that is convenient to transporation, shopping and local employment.

BD:ag18
Rev. 3-13-80
3-14-80

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT COSTA BOULEVARD PLAN AREA - 1980



General Plan Amendment
Town and Country Drive, Danville Area
Contra Costa County, California

INTRODUCTION

This amendment to the County General Plan pertains to the Land Use Element. The amendment area is an approximately four acre area straddling Town and Country Drive on the east side of Sheri Lane in the unincorporated community of Danville which lies within the San Ramon Valley Area of Contra Costa County. The boundary of the amendment area is shown on the attached map.

This amendment originated in a request for a review of the General Plan in the subject location from a prospective developer of the southern portion of the amendment area. The developer wanted a classification that would allow an office complex for their parcel. Particulars of the evolution of the amendment, along with findings and analyses, are contained in a staff report dated February 15, 1980.

AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

This amendment changes the land use classification of the subject area from Single Family Residential - Low Density (1-3 housing units per net acre) to Limited Office.

This change is shown on the attached amendment map.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

The initial environmental study indicated that no significant environmental impacts would result from the General Plan amendment; therefore, a Negative Declaration was prepared for the proposal.

LAND USE CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

The definition for the Land Use Element category utilized in this amendment is as follows:

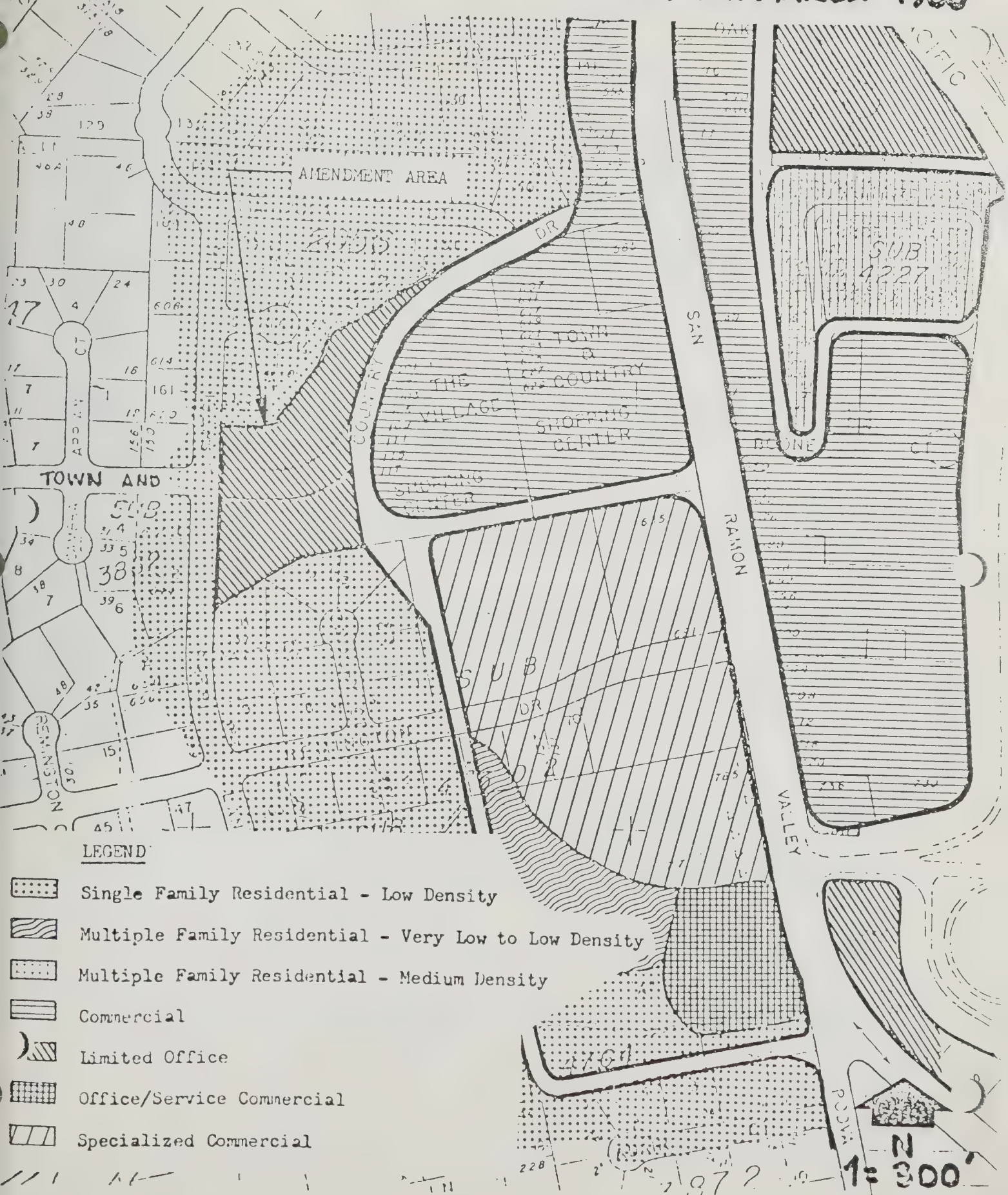
Limited Office - This designation is intended to accommodate general office uses on a minimum lot size of approximately one-third acre.

The fundamental design concern for any project within the amendment area shall be for providing compatibility with the surrounding residential area. Special attention shall be given to preservation of existing specimen trees and the location of active site uses away from residential areas. Buildings shall have a one-story, residential appearance for all sides. Direct access onto Sheri Lane shall be prohibited.

To assure that these design concerns are incorporated into final development plan, the zoning change request is to be considered together and simultaneously with the development plan.

BD:ag:lh3a
4-15-80
8/20/80
8/21/80

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT TOWN AND COUNTRY DRIVE PLAN AREA - 1980



SYCAMORE VALLEY GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

INTRODUCTION

This is an amendment to the Land Use, Circulation, Scenic Routes and Recreation Elements of the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan, a part of the County General Plan. This amendment process was initiated by a specific plan study prepared to implement the Sycamore Valley Special Concern Area policies. That specific plan study becomes the basis for review of the General Plan. Other decisions of the county have added to the need to review the General Plan for the Sycamore Valley Special Concern Area: the County's decision not to build an extension of Sycamore Valley road over Short ridge to serve the Blackhawk Ranch project, and its decision to change the main alignment of Blackhawk Road westerly of its old location.

I. AMENDMENT COMPONENTS

The land use amendment area covers all the land contained in Special Concern Area 1 as described in text on page 27 and mapped on page 28 of the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan. In addition to that area, it includes all the remainder of parcels shown for urban development which relate to the specific plan area as shown on the land use plan, Map 1.

For circulation element and scenic route purposes the amendment area includes all roadways which relate to the Special Concern Area. The revised Circulation Element map is shown as Map 2, and Scenic Route Map 3. The revised Recreation Element plan map is shown on Map 4.

This General Plan amendment modifies the proposals for Special Concern Area 1 and its boundaries but maintains it as a Special Concern Area in the plan. This amendment utilizes the standard General Plan categories found in the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan and those categories aren't redefined here. The following revised text and Special Concern Area Map 1, supercede those found in the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan on pages 27 and 28.

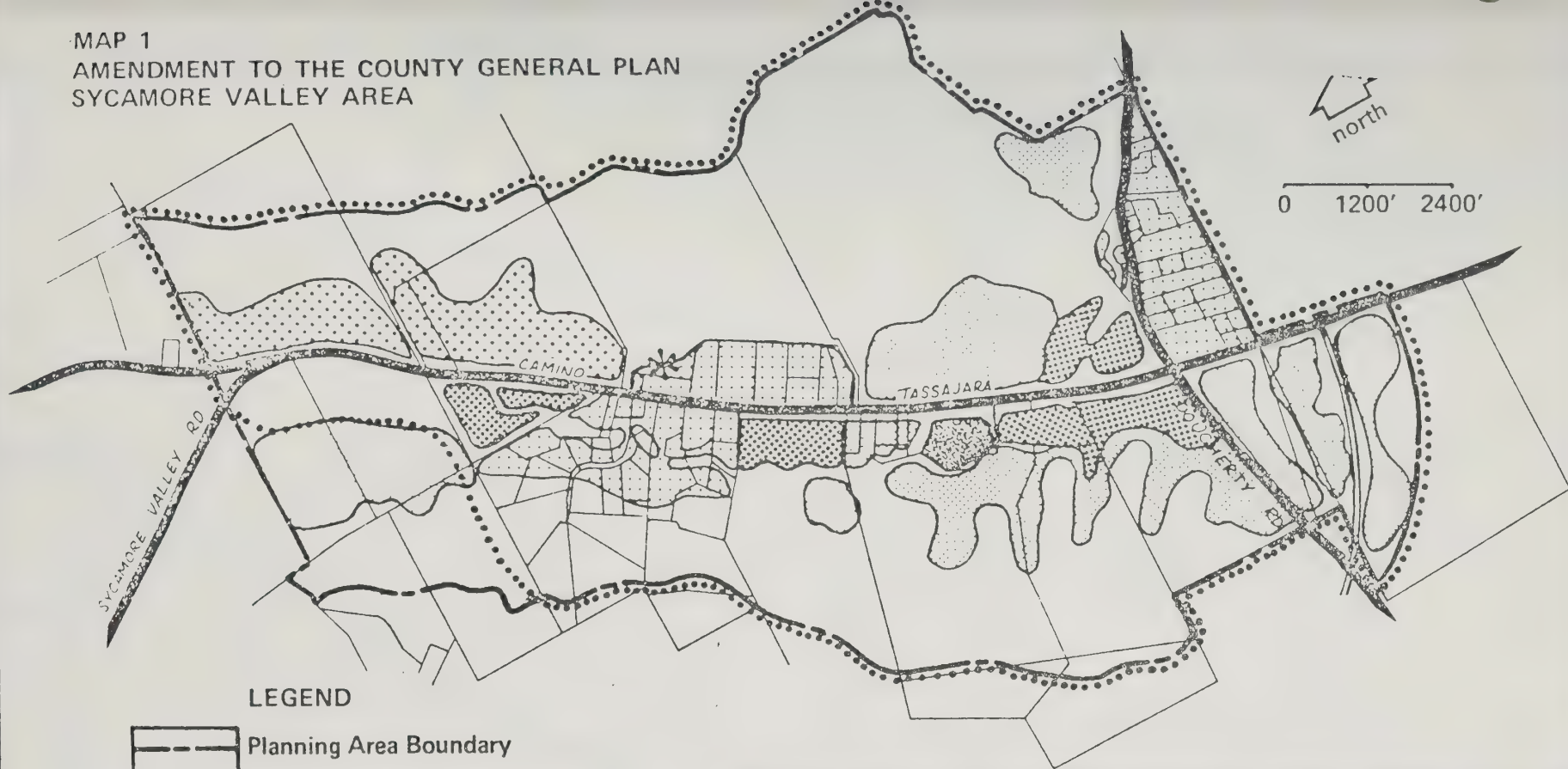
I. SPECIAL CONCERN AREA 1, SYCAMORE VALLEY

The Sycamore Valley area has long been planned for residential uses on the adopted County General Plan. The 1977 San Ramon Valley Area General Plan defined the lands available for residential development from those to be designated as open space. This plan revision further modifies the plan densities and configuration appropriate to this valley. This plan recognizes that development will occur in the valley and expresses concerns about the character of this growth.

The Sycamore Valley has two dominant visual features which warrant protection: Sycamore Creek and the hills flanking the valley.

The goal for development of this area is to provide for a range of housing types in keeping with Planning Area objectives and to ensure that the Sycamore Valley as a whole will

MAP 1
AMENDMENT TO THE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN
SYCAMORE VALLEY AREA



LEGEND

	Planning Area Boundary
	Special Concern Area Boundary
	Country Estates
	Single Family Residential- Low Density
	Single Family Residential- Medium Density
	Single Family Residential- High Density
	Limited Office
	Open Space
	Proposed School Site

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS APPROVED BY THE SAN RAMON VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION ON APRIL 1, 1981.

Linda P. Best

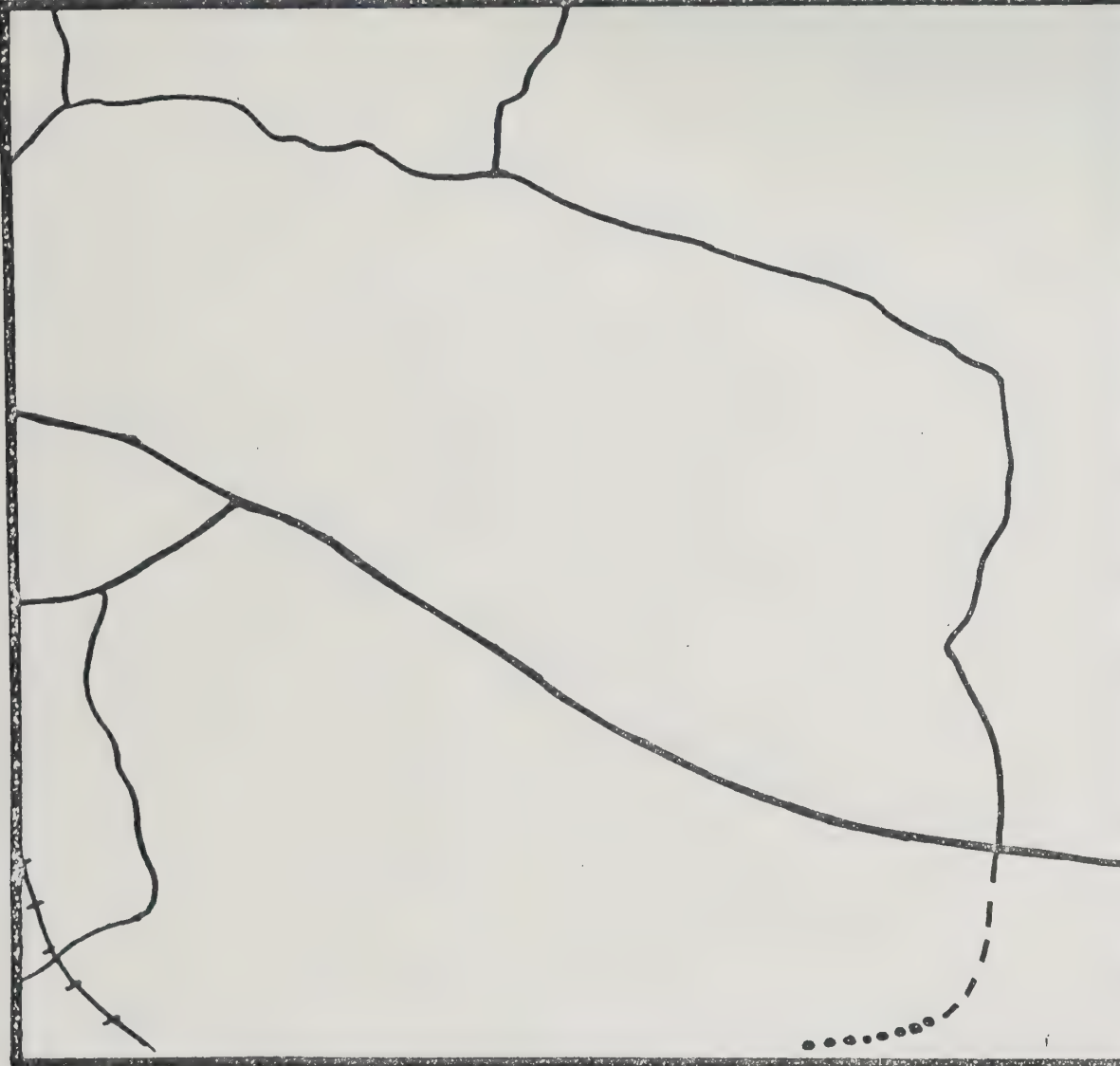
LINDA P. BEST, CHAIRMAN

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON OCTOBER 6, 1981.

James R. Olsson, Deputy Clerk

JAMES R. OLSSON, COUNTY CLERK

MAP 2 REVISED CIRCULATION ELEMENT PLAN



This revision:

1. Deletes Sycamore Valley Road Extension as a Project Related Major Road.
2. Designates Camino Blackhawk Road as an existing Major Road & deletes Old Blackhawk Road as one.
3. Deletes a portion of the existing alignment of Dougherty Ranch Road as existing Major Road.
4. Adds a redesignated portion of Dougherty Ranch Road as a Proposed Road.

LEGEND

- Existing Major Roads
- - - Proposed Roads
- Project Related Major Roads

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS APPROVED BY THE SAN RAMON VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION ON APRIL 1, 1981.

Linda P. Best
LINDA P. BEST, CHAIRMAN

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON OCTOBER 6, 1981.

Vera Nelson, Deputy Clerk
JAMES R. OLSSON, COUNTY CLERK



This revision:

1. Deletes Sycamore Valley Road extension as a Scenic Route.
2. Delete Old Blackhawk Road and an existing link of Dougherty Ranch Road as Scenic Routes.
3. Adds relocated Dougherty Ranch Road link and Camino Blackhawk Road as Scenic Routes.

LEGEND

..... Scenic Routes

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS APPROVED BY THE SAN RAMON VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION ON APRIL 1, 1981.

Linda P. Best
LINDA P. BEST, CHAIRMAN

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON OCTOBER 6, 1981.

Vera Nelson, Deputy Clerk
JAMES R. OLSSON, COUNTY CLERK

61



This revision:

1. Moves the location of the Community Park symbol to the area south of the intersection of Tassajara Road & Sycamore Valley Road.
2. Delete the Neighborhood Park symbol at the above-mentioned location.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS APPROVED BY THE SAN RAMON VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION ON APRIL 1, 1981.

Linda P. Best
LINDA P. BEST, CHAIRMAN

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON OCTOBER 6, 1981.

Vera Nelson, Deputy Clerk
JAMES R. OLSSON, COUNTY CLERK

achieve a suburban-rural appearance, and be unified and well-designed, rather than an incremental accumulation of separate conventional subdivisions. Hillside and creek preservation are essential to this concept. The area provides opportunities for innovative design and construction for homes, flood control works, outdoor amenities, and other features which will enable the area to retain its beauty and economic value.

The densities designated in the General Plan will not be permitted until the other public facilities and factors as mandated in the Sycamore Valley Specific Plan are implemented or committed.

Before a rezoning of property, a division of property or issuance of a discretionary permit, it must be found that the following adequate public improvements or services are in place or adequately assured:

1. Water by a publicly owned system
2. Sewer by a publicly owned system
3. Roads
4. Schools
5. Fire and Police protection facilities
6. Community park

The following principles will aid in achieving the General Plan objectives for the area:

- o Camino Tassajara Road will be constructed as a parkway throughout the valley. Local connections to this road will be kept to a minimum. Views of Sycamore Creek and of the hillsides will be encouraged as much as possible.
- o Hillsides and ridgetops will provide a backdrop to development. Housing units should be clustered on the valley floor with minimum disturbances to the higher ridgelands. Clustering of both attached and detached units will be encouraged so that the amount of land to remain open will be maximized.
- o The plan will reflect the existing country estates area located midway along the valley south of Camino Tassajara.
- o Sycamore Creek and its riparian vegetation should be protected in its natural state, to the maximum extent practical (according to the flood control plan for the Sycamore Creek) as it is a dominant visual feature of the valley and is of value to wildlife.
- o There shall be breaks between clusters of development along the road so that development will have open space area interspersed throughout the area.
- o To minimize the impact of development on service agencies for all major lands to be developed, all property owners must work together in an assessment

district or other appropriate mechanism to insure that service costs are borne by project developers to the extent mandated by those agencies' regulations.

- o To ensure that developments are integrated by trails and to create a sense of community, all major developments are required to be Planning Unit Developments.
- o Owners should be encouraged to develop their properties jointly in order to achieve the objectives of this Special Concern Area.
- o Architectural style and landscaping should reflect the natural beauty of the valley.
- o Although Boone Hill lies to the northwest, outside the boundaries of the Special Concern Area, it is part of Short Ridge. The ridgeland from Boone Hill to the Sycamore Valley Special Concern Area should remain in an open state and should not be obscured from view.
- o An entity will be established to maintain the open space and trails network concerning the entire area (excluding the areas already developed as country estates i.e., south of Camino Tassajara in the middle of the Valley and along Old Blackhawk Road) prior to any homes being occupied.

Further revisions to the plan text removed all reference on page 34 to the Sycamore Valley Road extension (Delete the second and third sentences of the second full paragraph on page 34).

D#9c
June 23, 1981

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT
CROW CANYON ROAD, SAN RAMON AREA
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

I. INTRODUCTION

This amendment to the County General Plan pertains to the Land Use, Scenic Routes, Circulation and Recreation Elements. The amendment area is generally located in the vicinity of the Crow Canyon Road/Interstate 680 Freeway interchange, between the Southern Pacific Right-of-Way and Old Crow Canyon Road. However, the revised text of the Controlled Manufacturing land use designation applies to the entire planning area of the 1977 San Ramon Valley Area General Plan.

The amendment originated from several requests for a review of the General Plan in the San Ramon area. Due to the proximity of the subject properties to one another and the possible implications of Plan changes on surrounding property. The San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission authorized a general plan review that grouped the requests into a single study, encompassing most of the prospective business area of the community of San Ramon.

The primary change associated with this General Plan Amendment is the addition of commercial uses on the west side of Interstate 680. The amendment also provides for additional residential area. The area committed to Controlled Manufacturing has been reduced in recognition of existing physical parameters and roadway improvements now under construction. Similarly, the location of trail facilities is also adjusted in recognition of other anticipated road improvements. Community design considerations are encouraged to foster a town identity and to promote an attractive, cohesive community.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

An initial environmental study determined that these changes to the County General Plan would not create any significant environmental impacts. Therefore, a Negative Declaration was issued by staff.

III. SUMMARY OF AMENDMENT

Land Use Element

This amendment provides for the following changes to the Land Use Element as shown on the attached General Plan Map:

- amend the land use designation of areas east of Interstate - 680 from Controlled Manufacturing to Commercial;
- amend the land use designation of approximately 20 acres fronting on the east side of Twin Creeks Drive and north side of Norris Canyon Road from Commercial to Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density;

- the architectural style of uses established on the block bounded by Crow Canyon Road, Norris Canyon Road, San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Twin Creeks Drive shall be harmonized;
- revise the text of the Controlled Manufacturing designation to allow research and development activities and other appropriate changes;

Circulation Element

Optimal traffic flows can be achieved by the realignment of Hilscher Way with Crow Canyon Place at Crow Canyon Road. Potential beneficiaries should be encouraged to jointly participate in the financing of this project.

Community Design and Scenic Routes Element

The following policies are complementary to and/or elaborate on previously adopted policies affecting San Ramon:

- encourage harmonious corridor development and visual linkages by effective use of landscaping and coordination of abutting private projects for Crow Canyon Road, Camino Ramon, Norris Canyon Road and San Ramon Valley Boulevard;
- development of commercial/office uses should be of an open and interactive nature by minimizing the amount of fencing and providing for direct pedestrian access between adjoining properties;

Recreation Element

The location of trails shall be adjusted as shown on the attached Trails Plan Map. Provision for creekside trails may be waived where such facilities cannot be located in a proposed flood control maintenance easement.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The five land use designations referred to in this amendment are indicated below:

Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density

This designation provides for 13 - 21 dwelling units per net acre.

For projects to qualify for the higher end of the density range, development plans should provide for the following:

- site plan integration and joint management agreement for maintenance of common facilities with abutting residential properties; a quality mix of recreation and other common facilities; provision of convenient east-to-west public pedestrian/bicyclist path(s) linking planned commercial areas with residential areas west of Twin Creeks Drive.

Commercial

Commercial areas provide for local shopping and business needs. This designation allows for a range of office scales including general and administrative office uses. Site design shall provide linkages with abutting, residential property.

This designation also provides for the timely adoption of compatible zoning as conditions warrant.

It is desirable that new development in the Thorup Lane area occur by consolidation of existing parcels. Affected property owners are encouraged to utilize the P-1 zone district to achieve ultimate development. Access points onto San Ramon Valley Boulevard should be minimized. Footbridges should be extended across San Ramon Creek. However, these guidelines are not intended to preclude development of existing parcels on an individual basis.

Controlled Manufacturing

Controlled Manufacturing, the only industrial land use designation in this Plan, provides for "clean" industrial uses, although the existing ordinance code allows for a range of manufacturing uses. Some manufacturing is more intense than is desirable for the San Ramon Planning area. The Plan allows a range of light industrial uses but excludes heavy industry in order to ensure compatibility with surrounding residential uses.

Existing manufacturing is light industrial in nature, which includes the manufacture of agricultural chemicals, communications equipment, fabricated metal products, pharmaceuticals and electronics equipment. Also included in this designation are contractor construction yards, administrative offices, and research and development activities. Although larger firms are primarily located near the Crow Canyon-Interstate 680 Interchange, numerous small fabricated operations are located near Danville interspersed with general businesses.

The San Ramon area contains the greatest amount of industrial acreage within the Planning Area. Because of good access to Interstates 680 and 580, this location is ideal for firms which depend on regular shipments of materials.

The eventual industrial development of the Bishop Ranch area will make a significant contribution to the tax base of the Valley. This suburban manufacturing area should also enable technical and managerial workers to maintain suburban homes without the need to commute long distances to work.

Limited Office

This designation is intended to accommodate general office uses on a minimum lot size of approximately 1/3 acre.

Planned Office

This designation provides for professional and general offices, as well as limited and appurtenant commercial uses. The designation occupies approximately six acres at the northwest corner of Norris Canyon Road and San Ramon Valley Boulevard. However, the location of the western boundary is imprecise and allows overlapping of adjacent residential uses.

Planned Office and residential areas abutting the north side of Norris Canyon Road and between Twin Creeks Drive and San Ramon Valley Boulevard shall be simultaneously reviewed for development plan approval as provided by the existing P-1 (planned unit development) zoning district.








IMPLEMENTATION

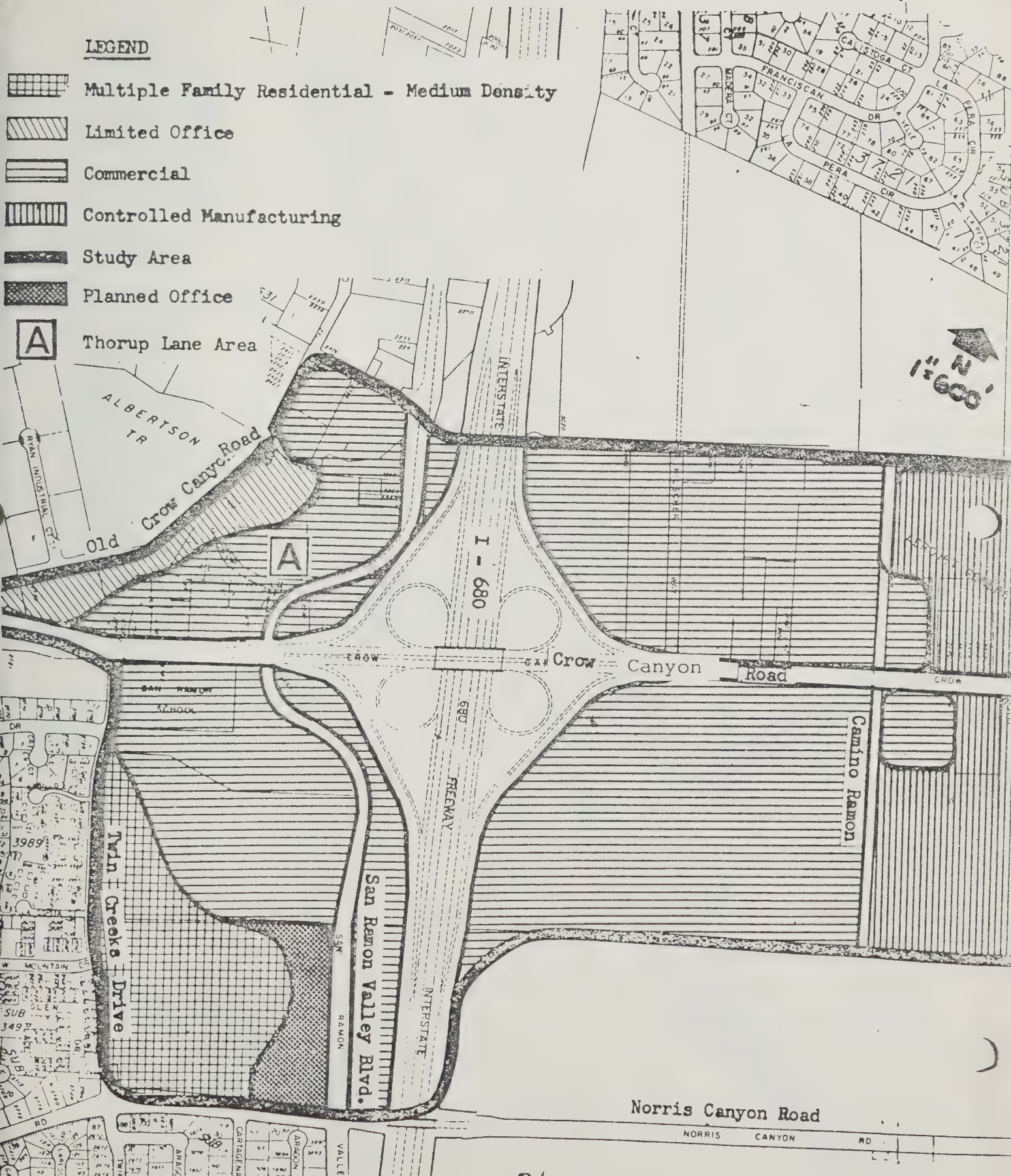
Landscaped Corridors

Staff is directed to work with affected property owners in the preparation of a street tree program for major corridors in the Planning Area. The program will be submitted to the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission for adoption by resolution.

CROW CANYON ROAD GENERAL PLAN SAN RAMON AREA

LEGEND

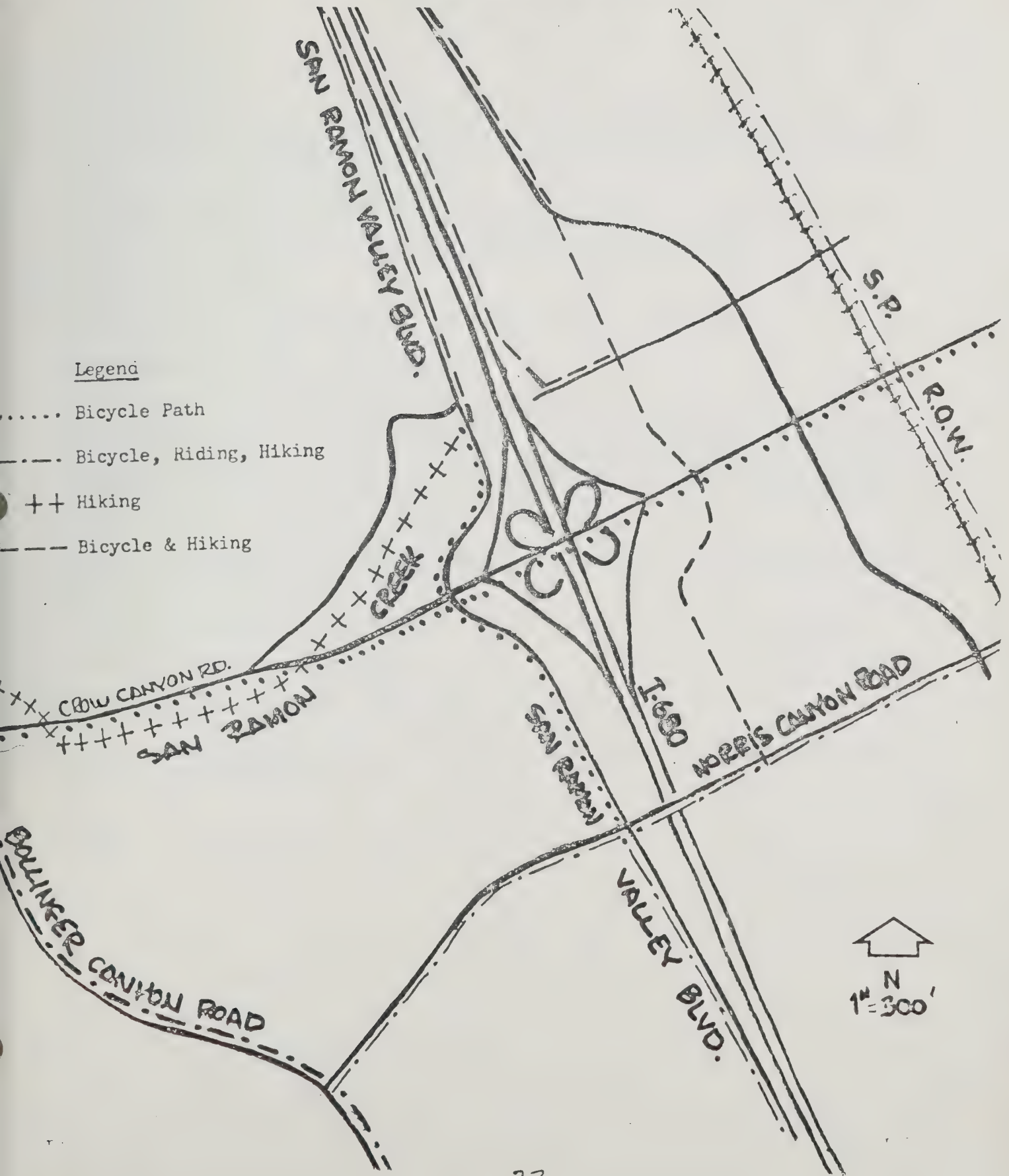
-  Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density
-  Limited Office
-  Commercial
-  Controlled Manufacturing
-  Study Area
-  Planned Office
-  Thorup Lane Area



TRAILS PLAN CROW CANYON ROAD SAN RAMON AREA

Legend

- Bicycle Path
- Bicycle, Riding, Hiking
- ++ Hiking
- Bicycle & Hiking



BOLLINGER CANYON ROAD
GENERAL PLAN
SAN RAMON AREA

I. INTRODUCTION

This amendment to the County General Plan pertains to the Land Use Element. The amendment area is located in the San Ramon area at the southwest quadrant of Bollinger Canyon Road and Alcosta Boulevard and abuts the east side of the Southern Pacific Right-of-Way (see attached map).

The change associated with this amendment is to redesignate 55 acres from Single Family Residential - Medium Density to Single Family Residential - High Density.

II. LAND USE ELEMENT

The land use designation referred to in this amendment is defined below:

Single Family Residential - High Density

This designation provides for more intensive development on lands enjoying convenient road access and in proximity to nearby employment areas. Housing in this designation shall be in the overall density range of 4 to 7 units per net acre. However, variation in site design and housing types are encouraged including attached units and common open areas. Coordinated development with adjoining properties is also encouraged. Perimeter design along arterial roadways should provide for an open visual appearance.

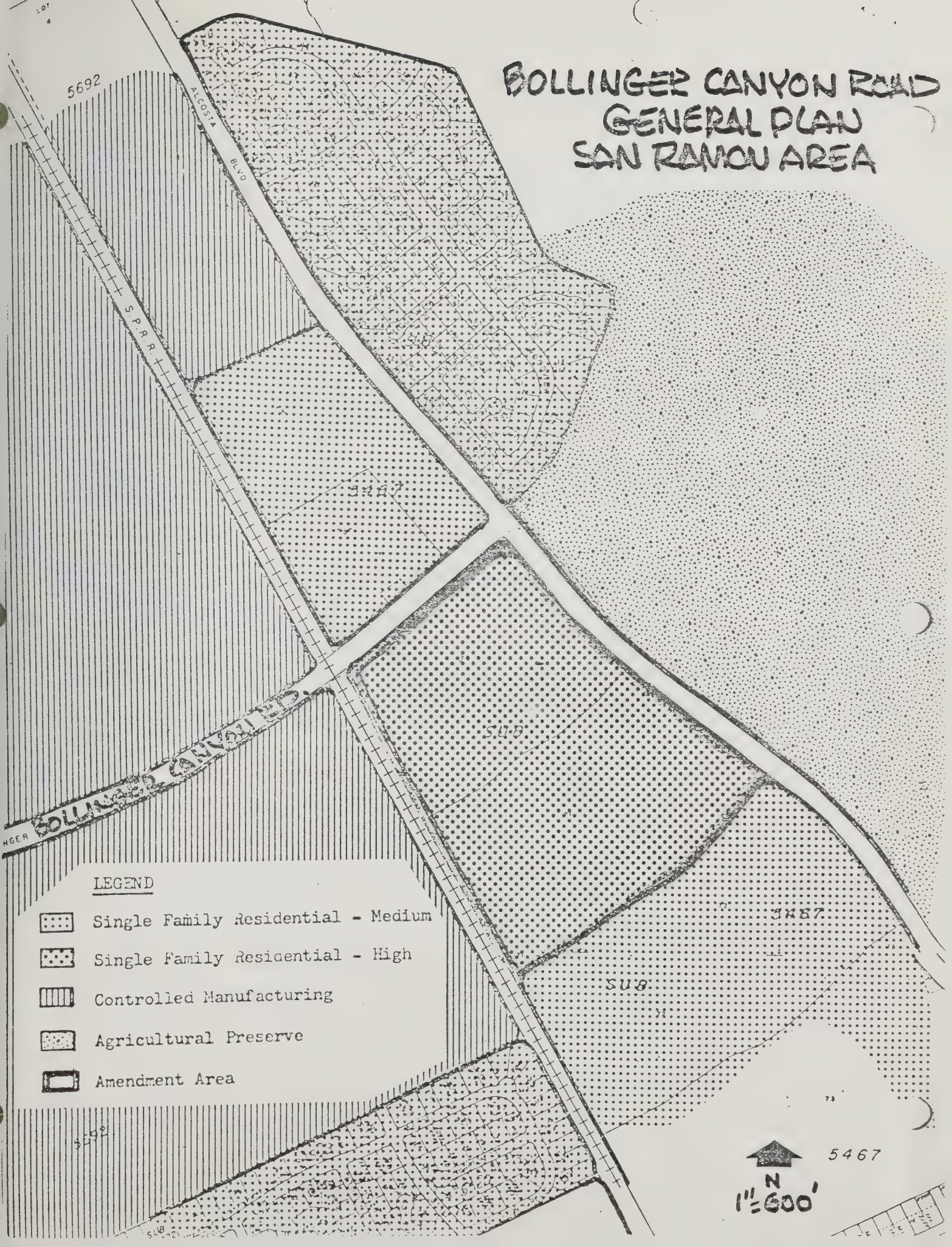
Several considerations shall be studied during project review and the findings incorporated into the design of the project as follows:

- Noise attenuation study investigation.
- Geotechnical study investigation.
- Recognition of Condition 17 of Development Plan No. 3014-81.

Projects within the amendment area shall be reviewed under the Planned Unit Development (P-1) zoning district.

BD:jal/4
2/9/82

BOLLINGER CANYON ROAD GENERAL PLAN SAN RAMON AREA



KIMBALL AVENUE
GENERAL PLAN
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

I. INTRODUCTION

This amendment to the County General Plan pertains to the Land Use Element. The amendment area is located in the South San Ramon area, immediately north of the north boundary line of Alameda County and one-quarter mile east of Interstate 680.

The change associated with this amendment is to redesignate thirteen acres within the block bounded by Alcosta Boulevard, Village Parkway and Kimball Avenue from Commercial to Multiple Family Residential-Medium Density.

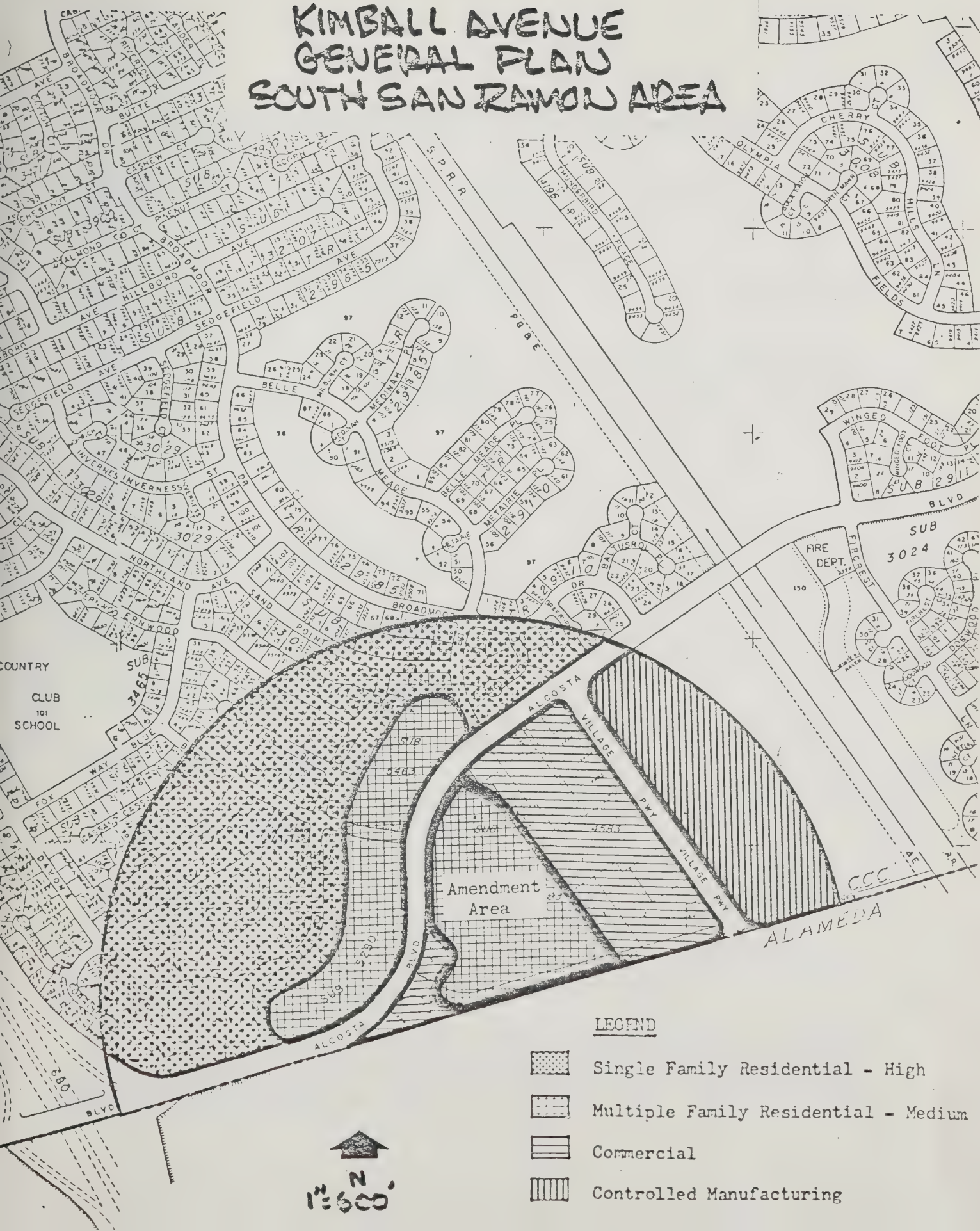
I. LAND USE ELEMENT

The land use designation referred to in this amendment is defined below:

Multiple Family Residential-Medium Density

This designation provides for intensive residential development for sites with convenient access to local employment, transportation and shopping facilities and in the density range of 13 to 21 dwelling units per net acre. Appropriate visual and pedestrian linkages with adjoining commercial facilities should be considered during project review and incorporated into the design of the project.

KIMBALL AVENUE GENERAL PLAN SOUTH SAN RAMON AREA



NORTH DOUGHERTY HILLS GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT TEXT

Unless inconsistent with this amendment, the elements of the County General Plan apply to this planning area.

LAND USE/OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

This amendment provides for the following changes to the Land Use and Open Space Elements as shown on the attached General Plan map.

Amend the land use designation on the Kaplan-Wiedemann property from Open Space (Agricultural Preserve) to Low Density-Single Family Residential, Medium Density-Single Family Residential, Low Density-Multiple Family Residential, and Medium Density-Multiple Family Residential, hotel/lodge clubhouse and General Open Space.

Amend the Harper property from Open Space to Medium Density-Multiple Family Residential.

The six land use categories authorized by this amendment are summarized below:

- A. Low Density-Single Family Residential - This designation will allow for a density range of 1 to 3 units per net acre. Some estate lots may be allowed in this category.
- B. Medium Density-Single Family Residential - Areas designated under this category allows for a density range of 3 to 5 units per net acre.
- C. Low Density-Multiple Family Residential - This designation allows for a range of densities from 7 to 12 units per acre.
- D. Medium Density-Multiple Family Residential - This designation allows a range of density from 13 to 21 units per acre.
- E. Hotel/Lodge/Clubhouse - This designation provides for lodging facilities and ancillary uses together with a golf course, recreational or other related uses.
- F. Open Space - Open space associated with development projects and to maintain the scenic character of the San Ramon Valley and its environs, to maintain the continuity of natural open space and to define and separate urban areas. Additional lands may be included in the open space category at the project phase.

Under the Planned Unit District clustering of units will allow for creative siting and design, integrating common facilities abutting residential properties.

The land uses and their layout on the General Plan Map are intended to be conceptual, provided, however, that the overall maximum densities proposed shall not be exceeded without a further General Plan change except as provided below. Densities may be reduced or reorganized within the Plan area project phase once the site is studied in greater detail.

At the project phase efforts should be made to help balance jobs and housing consistent with local development patterns.

If low or moderate income housing is provided to help balance job's and housing, then increases in densities over those proposed may be considered.

Identification of precise mitigation measures to protect agricultural lands will be accomplished at the project phase. Among the alternates to be reviewed will be erection of an adequate barrier, establishment of an open space buffer and phasing of project development. Structures and grading should be discouraged on major ridges in order to lessen visual impact. Final reconciliation of the open space policies established with the Sycamore Specific Plan with the extension of Crow Canyon Road should occur at the project phase.

Special consideration shall be given to the revegetation and preservation of watercourses as natural open space.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the General Plan will occur with zoning changes to bring about consistency between the General Plan and zoning. Project phasing will be reviewed at the zoning phase. Consideration of a zone change at this time is appropriate but an agricultural preserve cancellation request will need to be processed and approved for development to occur prior to 1991.

The project phase to implement the General Plan will be accomplished under the Planned Unit District Ordinance. Detailed reports/conditions/mitigation measures dealing with project phasing, environmental impact, riparian habitat, roads, sewer, water, flood control, day care, schools, parks, fire protection and other urban services will be prepared for the project phase as suggested by the Final EIR for North Dougherty Hills GPA (August, 1982).

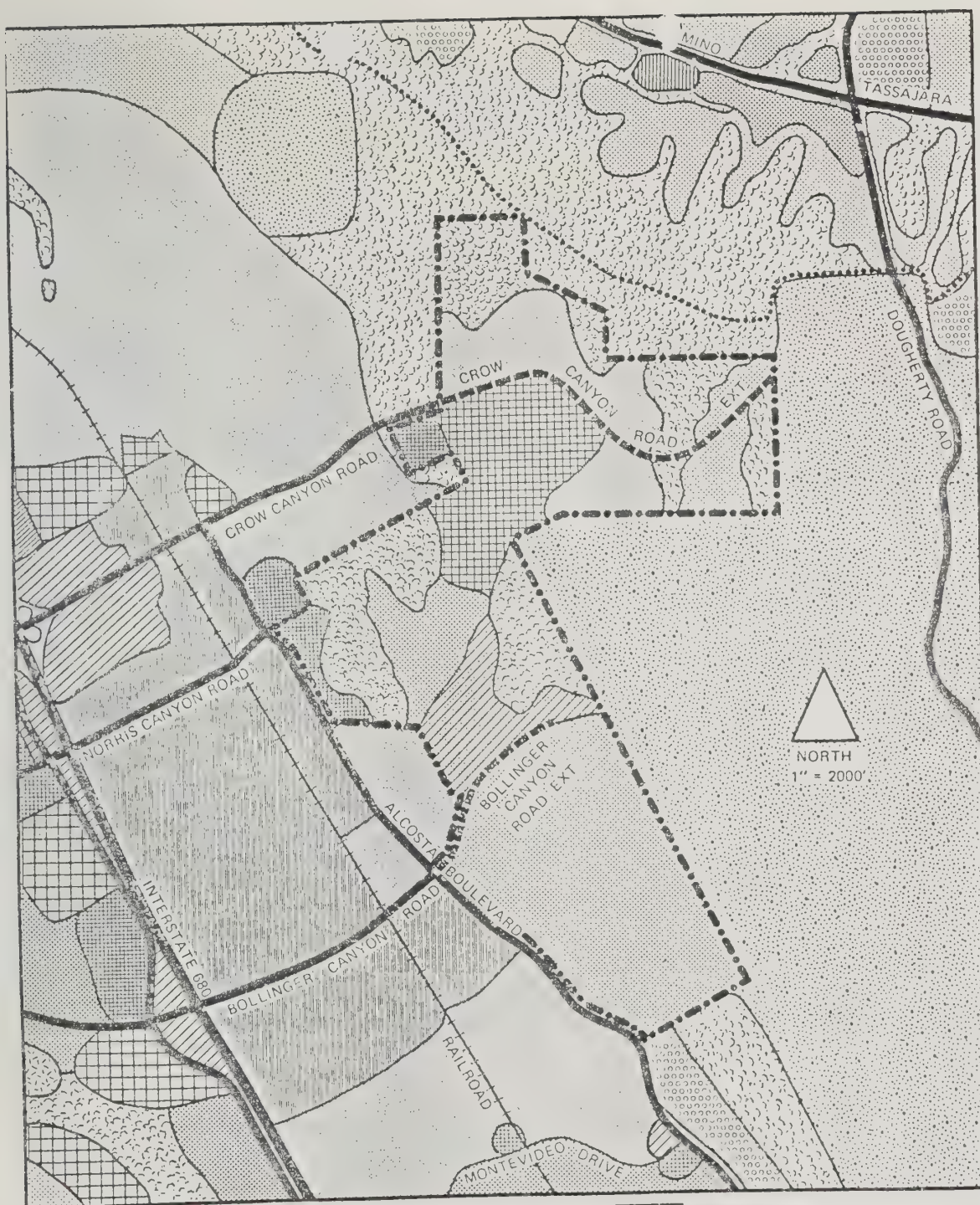
CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The phasing, construction and timing of the Crow Canyon Road extension (as shown on the existing Circulation Element) will be reviewed at the project phase. The 1977 General Plan Amendment indicates Bollinger Canyon Road passing within the site through Watson Canyon to intersect with Crow Canyon Road. This amendment removes this requirement and shows Bollinger extending only to the middle of this study area. Any general plan decision to extend Bollinger to properties to the east should be made with the general planning for those properties.

INFRASTRUCTURE

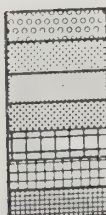
During Preliminary Development Plan review, under rezoning to Planned Unit District, the impacts of the ultimate project on roads, schools, fire, and water and storage facilities, sanitary sewers, flood control, parks, drainage facilities, trails, recreation facilities, and other necessary urban services, will be identified and mitigation measures developed for implementation at the project phase.

NH/ed#6
9/10/82
9/20/82

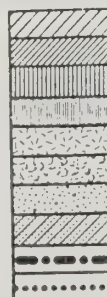


NORTH DOUGHERTY HILLS GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

LEGEND



SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - COUNTRY ESTATE
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - LOW DENSITY
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - MEDIUM DENSITY
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - HIGH DENSITY
MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - VERY LOW DENSITY
MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - LOW DENSITY
MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - MEDIUM DENSITY



COMMERCIAL
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
LIMITED OFFICE
CONTROLLED MANUFACTURING
PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC
GENERAL OPEN SPACE
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE
LODGE & CLUBHOUSE
AMENDMENT AREA BOUNDARY
SPECIAL CONCERN AREA BOUNDARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO
THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN WAS
APPROVED BY THE SAN RAMON VALLEY AREA
PLANNING COMMISSION ON SEPTEMBER 15, 1982.

Joseph L. Hirsch
JOSEPH L. HIRSCH, CHAIRMAN

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS AMENDMENT TO
THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN
WAS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ON December 7, 1982

James R. Olsson
JAMES R. OLSSON, COUNTY CLERK

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

RECEIVED
12-7-83
Submitted by Jack R.
SAN RAMON VALLEY
PLANNING COMMISSION REC

TO: Board of Supervisors

DATE: May 20, 1981

FROM: Anthony A. Dehaes
Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Tassajara Rezoning 2218-RZ

At the meeting of April 14, 1981 the Board closed the public hearing and scheduled the matter for decision on May 5, 1981. You directed staff to review the comments made by the public at your hearings of March 31, 1981 and April 14, 1981 and to prepare responses to those comments. In addition you asked for other staff comments to specific points raised by the Board at the conclusion of the hearing.

The following report:

- a) makes staff recommendations
- b) comments on specific points raised by the Board and
- c) summarizes comments made by all speakers questioning the rezoning and staff responses to the comments. The comments of those speakers in favor of the rezoning are not summarized or commented upon.

A. Staff recommendation:

That the Board adopt the Tassajara rezoning (2218-RZ) as recommended by the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission.

The suggested findings are as follows:

- 1) The rezoning is required to bring the zoning in the Tassajara area into conformity with the adopted County General Plan (San Ramon Valley Area General Plan)
- 2) The rezoning is necessary to preserve the open space and agricultural land uses as indicated by the General Plan which reflects existing land uses.
- 3) The rezoning is necessary to regulate the need for expensive urban services that would be required to service higher density residential land uses.
- 4) The rezoning is necessary to maintain the County's future for agricultural production and to provide for the future orderly growth of the area when development is warranted.
- 5) Areas within the Tassajara area that are designated "Stage III" are to be reviewed for a general plan amendment and at such time as the general plan is amended the area will be rezoned to be consistent with the General Plan.

In the following sections there will be recommended findings if your Board wishes to modify the recommendation of the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission.

B. Comments on specific points raised by the Board:

1) Cattlemen's suggestion.

Approximately two-thirds of the land within the Tassajara rezoning are presently under Williamson Act Contract and, as pointed out by County Counsel, cannot be subdivided as suggested by the Cattlemen without a cancellation of the contract. But such a prohibition should not prevent the County from considering ways to implement the program when possible. County Counsel has already advised that the current zoning regulations would allow the mechanism for accomplishing this providing that the County General Plan so indicates in its text. Therefore we recommend that the Board:

Instruct staff to review and consider a general plan text amendment to allow for the Cattlemen's proposal or some alternative developed through the hearing process. Such an amendment would delineate the conditions under which agricultural lands could be subdivided, proximity to roads, other non-agricultural ranchettes, water and septic tank availability, impact on agricultural uses within the area, etc.

2) Exclusion of areas from the Tassajara rezoning.

The requests for exclusion can be generally placed into three categories;

(1) Stage III, (a) from the present easterly end of Crow Canyon Road to the alignment of Crow Canyon Road established in the Sycamore Valley General and Specific Plans now before the Board and (b) Stage III along the south side of Camino Tassajara east of old Blackhawk Road and generally south of the Blackhawk Ranch development.

(2) Lands where active, specific rezoning requests are pending: Parker; The Board authorized the preparation of an EIR for the Parker parcel. The EIR is to evaluate a variety of possible densities and the matter will be considered by the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission in July. Hayes; This matter is before the Board on appeal.

(3) Lands where there are pending minor subdivisions. These are noted below under comments by the public. We recommend that no areas be excluded.

Stage III (a) and (b) will be the subject of a general plan review in the near future. Since the precise lines of development of urban densities have not been delineated such an exclusion may open up an area of misinformation as to the County's intent as to where development may take place. Also if a property owner were to apply for a subdivision that met all of the A-2 zoning requirements the County might be faced with approving the project at a density far lower than is ultimately desirable.

Other properties presently being considered for rezoning should be included until the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission has concluded its hearings on the matter and sends its recommendations to the Board. We recommend that the Hayes parcel be excluded from 2218-RZ until you conclude your hearings.

All other parcels should be rezoned as recommended. Our report comments on each of these parcels under discussion below.

3) Moratorium

A moratorium for the Tassajara area would require a 4/5 vote of the Board. Because of the findings required by law for such an action by the Board and because such an action would severely limit the rights of the property owners to do anything with their property we recommend no action on this option.

AAD:plp13

cc: County Counsel
County Administrator

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS FROM BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S MEETING OF 3/31/81

Hearing on recommendation of the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission (2218-RZ) to rezone land in the Tassajara area (continued from joint session of Board of Supervisors/SRVAPC on February 24, 1981). (Note: The following comments appear in a capsulized form.

SPEAKER # 1. Dr. Flanagan (AP# 204-080-001, 204-090-001, 204-100-001, 204-110-001) (320+ acres) (A-2 existing, A-2 and A-40 proposed).

COMMENTS:

- A. Dr. Flanagan feels 2218-RZ was made with a "broad sweeping pen", not reflective of the "sensible land use planning" called for by the Board in September 1979 when the new Exclusive Agricultural Districts were adopted as "planning tools" (A-20, A-40 and A-80).
- B. Dr. Flanagan asked the Board to take into consideration the fact that all A-2 lands in the County were subject to a zoning text amendment in 1971 which increased the minimum lot size in the A-2 District from one acre to five acres.
- C. Dr. Flanagan called preparation of an EIR to review the impacts of the proposal.
- D. Dr. Flanagan indicated a desire for all his land to stay A-2 as it is surrounded by parcels reflective of the A-2 minimum.
- E. Dr. Flanagan stated that if the purpose of the plan is to retain agricultural lands, then it should be acknowledged that "agriculture" in the valley is at best marginal (indicating the feed must be supplemented).

He further stated that if the purpose is to preserve "open space" then a five acre minimum suffices, especially when lands in question are in close proximity to Mt. Diablo State Parklands.

RESPONSES:

- A. The establishment of the exclusive agricultural districts provided the "planning tools" called for within the goals and policies of the 1977 SRVAPC. These "tools" are made available to implement the general plan as it pertains to the Tassajara Valley. the total study area is approximately 34,700 acres but includes some land outside the jurisdiction of the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission. The proposed plan takes into account as many lot-specific details as possible (e.g. General Plan land use designations, existing zoning, existing lot size, surrounding lot pattern, existing land use, slope, soils, proximity of urban services, findings of earlier studies, (e.g. ridgeland studies, Tassajara Citizen Committee, etc.), available citizen input, judicial review of pertinent matters, (e.g. impact of judicial actions pertaining to Williamson Act Contract lands), vegetation, groundwater, etc.).

The zoning action under consideration is specific to the Tassajara Valley stemming from the policies established from the 1977 SRVAGP. The lands of Tassajara cannot, and should not, be compared on equal terms to the crop lands found elsewhere in the county.

A negative declaration of environmental significance was filed by the Planning Department for this project pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.

The surrounding lands that have been developed into ranchette-sized lots are on relatively flat land. The portion of Flanagan's parcel proposed for an A-2 to A-40 zoning change is the hilly portion of his property. Most of the surrounding ranchettes were established prior to the 1972 A-2 zoning ordinance change (5 acre minimum established).

The question of the agricultural viability of lands within the study area undoubtedly will be argued back and forth from this point on, but it is our opinion that the following are applicable to the study area.

1. The bulk of land in the valley historically has been used as grazing land and in the foreseeable future will remain available for that use.
2. The larger the unit of land, the more likely it will be available for agricultural production (and the larger the potential income will be that can be realized from the land).
3. An area of land used as a single unit is more likely to be profitable than the same area divided into smaller units.

The "purpose" of the plan is multi-dimensional, and cannot and should not be assigned to a single goal or purpose. The elements which collectively make up the "purpose" of this proposal have been delineated in previous reports, and can be summarized briefly as follows:

The Planning Commission initiated rezoning for the Tassajara area (2218-RZ) basically to implement the General Plan; to preserve agriculture, to prevent increased services demands outside of urban areas, to limit development to existing urban areas, and to preserve open space. The rezoning is not designed to, nor will it, deprive land owners of the use of their property. The plan will allow the full range of agricultural uses and very limited residential development.

SPEAKER #2: Gene Broadman (AP# 006-290-001 and 002, 006-300-001) (310+ acres) (A-2 existing; A-80 proposed).

COMMENTS:

- A. Mr. Broadman feels review of eastern portion of study area, including his parcels, has been extremely "broad-brush", feels more quantitative analysis, perhaps an EIR is warranted.

- B. Mr. Broadman forwarded a view that was based on a "down-zoning ratio", and that the proposed action is discriminatory and unequitable. Mr. Broadman defined his terminology "down-zoning ratio" as the ratio of the minimum lot size for existing zoning to the minimum lot size of the proposed zoning (e.g. a lot with A-2 zoning with a 5 acre minimum if it were to be rezoned to A-80 with an 80 acre minimum would, by Mr. Broadman's definition, have a "down-zoning ratio" of 1:16).

RESPONSES:

- A. See prior response "A" for Dr. Flanagan.
- B. The minimum lot sizes, both existing and proposed, for the study area in 2218-RZ are not to be interpreted as explicit guarantees for land divisions to those minimums. The actual minimum lot sizes to be established are controlled by the underlying general plan designations and policies and by site specific considerations. Across the board generalities are unwarranted.

Although certain lands within the study area may not be established as an Agricultural Preserve, they may still be available for or are actually under agricultural production. Comparison of the respective minimum lot sizes as established by the Zoning Ordinance (5 acres for A-2 and 20 acres for A-4) is unfounded and inappropriate. Participation in the Williamson Act Contract Program (Ag Preserve) denotes the rancher's interest in receiving a tax break on his agricultural lands.

SPEAKER #3. Dan Van Voorhis, representing the Blackhawk Corp. (AP# 217-050-001, 002 and 003) (415 acres) (A-4 existing, A-80 proposed)

COMMENTS:

Mr. Van Voorhis requested the Board give special consideration to lands designated as "Stage III Lands" stating that application of the A-80 Zoning District and the subsequent initiation of a general plan review to contemplate higher residential density "may confuse the public". He requests that the "Stage III Lands" be delineated and excluded from this study.

Specifically he requests that the portion of property identified as the Weidemann-Kaplan property which lies within the study area be excluded from consideration and that it retain its existing zoning (A-4). The reasons for this request were presented in the letter of 3/27/81, which reads in part as follows:

(1) The parcel is within the East Bay Municipal Utility District, can be served by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District and is oriented to the San Ramon Valley (not the Tassajara Valley);

(2) Although completion of the Crow Canyon Road extension is not needed to serve said 400 acre parcel, said parcel is in fact bisected by the proposed extension as it is shown on the present general plan and zoning said parcel to A-80 is inconsistent with the memo dated 3/12/81 from W. R. Gray, Assistant Public Works Director.

(3) Zoning said 400+ acre parcel to A-80 is also inconsistent with the Planning Commission's recent decision to include said parcel in its general plan review of the sub-area designed to redefine the limits of urban growth for the area (so called "Stage III").

RESPONSE:

Staff continues to recommend application of the A-80 designation on the above properties. The reasons are as follows:

- 1) The rezoning as proposed (A-4 to A-80) and the property's current Ag Preserve status together will serve to control minor subdivision activity.
- 2) The planning process for the Weidemann-Kaplan proposal must begin with a general plan review. Any action predicting that amendment is prejudicially circumventing the sequences necessary in the planning process.

If the Board thinks that particular action is warranted for this property or other "Stage III Land", one method available to the Board would be to so indicate in the resolution adopting the Tassajara Zoning.

SPEAKER #4 & #5. Jeff Weidemann and Don Wood representing the Alameda-Contra Costa Cattlemen's Assoc. (Jeff Weidemann's discussion included specific reference to the Weidemann-Kaplan property; AP// 217-050-001, 002 and 003) (415 acres) (A-4 existing; A-80 proposed)

COMMENTS:

In support of the Cattlemen's proposed agricultural district which was submitted for review by the Board and the Planning Department; the speaker's made the following observations:

1. A "fixed acreage zoning" proposal is bad as it leads to bad land management.
2. The proposed 80 acre minimum lot size removes the "safety valve" needed for ranchers to liquify assets accumulated in land.
3. Available zoning options (use of P-1, or use of A-20, A-40 and A-80 'clustering' variances) are not seen as being a 'politically viable' options for ranchers in the valley over the long run as the ultimate decision is with the hearing body not with the property owner.
4. The purported merits of the cattlemen's approach were discussed; leaves 90% of land in its current size for 15 years, allows "simultaneous compensation for rezoning" by giving property owners the option to sell 10% of their land, "compensation would cover speculative value of the land", "equal and assured", spreads traffic by not concentrating ranchette development at Finley Road, provides chance of long-term agricultural stability.

RESPONSES:

County Counsel has advised the Board that the implementation of the 'cattlemen's' proposal over existing Ag Preserve lands (2/3 of the study area) apparently cannot be done during the term of active contracts.

Application of a similar proposal in Alameda County has led to a law suit involving a parcel's agricultural preserve status.

It is further noted by County Counsel that the cattlemen's proposal has not been the specific subject of noticed hearings before the SRVAPC or the Board or a subject of staff consideration for CEQA purposes.

Contra Costa County is one of the few counties in northern California that still has minimal acreage standards for rangeland production. In those counties where new acreage minimums of 60 acres to 360 acres have been imposed, rangeland production continues.

The "cattlemen's" proposal would retain all options to the ranchers, while weakening the County's control over inappropriate and ill-timed subdivisions.

The "tools" already exist within the County Zoning Code which would allow for consideration of what the Cattlemen's Association is proposing once the lands are free of Agricultural Preserve Contract restrictions.

SPEAKER #6. Brian Thiessen, representing 1) Dr. J.J. Parker (AP# 204-050-023) (145+ acres) (A-2 existing, A-80 proposed) 2) Land Factors (AP# 204-120-004) (48+ acres) (A-4 existing, A-20 proposed) 3) Morrison (AP# 206-020-060, 061 and 063) (80 acres) (A-2 existing, A-20 proposed) 4) Jolinson (AP# 206-010-006) (230+ acres) (A-2 existing, outside of study area) 5) Bloch Inc. (AP# 206-020-046) (132+ acres) (A-2 existing, A-20 proposed).

COMMENTS:

Mr. Thiessen's general comments include discussion of the appropriateness of the application of 20, 40 and 80 acre minimums on lands in close proximity to Blackhawk and the Sycamore Specific Plan lands. Mr. Thiessen questioned the purpose of the proposal stating that the apparent purpose appears to be the "preservation of open space" as it is tied to a "draw-bridge" syndrome. Mr. Thiessen's comments on specific parcels are as follows:

- 1) Rancho del Sol - Dr. J. J. Parker. Mr. Thiessen and Dr. Parker requested retention of the A-2 zoning stating that the 145 acre parcel is in proximity to ranchette sized lots, that the parcel should not be "judged by surrounding A-4 lands", that there is adequate water to service this P-1 concept proposal (2425-RZ).
- 2) Land Factors. Mr. Thiessen stated that the Hayes' property is surrounded by smaller lots and asks that it be zoned in a manner "compatible to historic zoning". He referenced the findings of the cancellation of that property's Agricultural Preserve Contract which pointed to the non-agricultural nature of the property.
- 3) Morrison. Mr. Thiessen stated that the proposed A-20 designation does not acknowledge surrounding A-2 sized lots and asks that this parcel be included within the Stage III area and then removed from consideration within the Tassajara zoning.

4) Johnson. Mr. Thiessen asks to have this parcel removed from consideration as it is directly across from Blackhawk's proposed commercial area and within the Stage III lands.

5) Bloch, Inc. Mr. Thiessen again points to site's proximity to Blackhawk lands and ask it and all Stage III lands be removed from consideration.

RESPONSES:

In response to Mr. Thiessen's general comments it should be sufficient to point out that the subject proposal is designed to implement the existing general plan. The land use designations, as established by the 1977 San Ramon Valley Area General Plan are not the same for the Tassajara Study Area, the Blackhawk lands and for lands within the Sycamore Valley Specific Plan.

1. Specific responses to the Rancho del Sol property are provided in the response to Mr. Stregels' comments (Speaker #9). The Board should note that it has a pending rezoning proposal for this property and it may choose to remove this property from consideration under 2218-RZ and hear the pending proposal on its merits.
2. The proposed zoning designations for lands along Johnson Road are presented as being reflective of existing lot patterns and of the site specific constraints (slope, soils, access etc.). Again, the Board should note that it has a pending rezoning proposal for this property and it may choose to remove it from consideration under 2218-RZ and hear the pending proposal on its merits.
3. & 5. Morrison's parcel and the Bloch, Inc. property are parcels within the Camino Tassajara corridor with site specific constraints that warrant a more restrictive zoning designation (A-20). The adjacent, more developable lands along Lawrence Road have already substantially been developed down to the existing zoning designation minimums (one acre prior to 1972, 5 acres after 1972).
4. The Johnson parcel is not within the Study Area for 2218-RZ.

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS FROM BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S MEETING OF APRIL 14, 1981

Hearing on recommendation of the San Ramon Valley Area Planning Commission (2218-RZ) to rezone land in the Tassajara area (continued from March 31, 1981).

SPEAKER #7: Jack Beard, Livermore, CA representing the Lynch Ranch Properties on Morgan Territory Road. (AP# 006-280-005 & 006-070-018) (282+ acres) (A-4 existing, A-80 proposed).

COMMENTS:

- A. "A-80 zoning is unrealistic, unreasonable in that the land is unsuitable for profitable agricultural operation".
- B. "The immediate area to the south, the west and the east is subdivided into smaller parcels".
- C. "Zoning to A-80 does not necessarily resolve all the problems in the rural areas".
"What this could do is stimulate a perpetual request.....for lesser zoning".

RESPONSES:

The parcel in question is under the Williamson Act Contract (1736-RZ), while surrounding lands that have been divided into smaller parcels and zoned A-2 are not. The majority of the land divisions occurred prior to the 1972 ordinance amendment which modified the minimum lot standard for the A-2 District from a one acre minimum to a five acre minimum. Lands to the east of the parcel (four of the five lots ranging in size from 22 to 40 acres) were created by a 1964 land division. The fifth lot apparently predates the requirements established by the State Map Act.

While retention of agricultural vitality is an important consideration for the rezoning study, other issues support a consideration to rezone outlying lands such as the parcel in question. We continue to recommend an A-4 to A-80 rezoning for this parcel. The proposed zoning change reflects the topographical constraints of the property and the site's relatively remote location. Lands in the vicinity that are currently zoned A-2 are proposed for an A-2 to A-40 zoning change to reflect existing lot size patterns.

SPEAKER #8: Lou Seever (AP# 206-180-003) (37+ acres) (A-2 existing; A-40 proposed).

COMMENTS:

- A. "....My piece of property is in a group of small acreages."
- B. "My property is not in the Williamson Act".
- C. "We're not developers; we're not coming out to butcher the landscape and get the hell out".

D. Seever also states that parcels at proposed size (12, 12 & 13 acres) can have potential agricultural productivity (e.g., 4-H, FFA in project steers).

RESPONSES:

Mr. Seever desires retention of the A-2 zoning district to accommodate his pending minor subdivision requests (MS 42-80). This request was filed approximately two years after a similar application (MS 247-77, three lots for the same 37 acre parcel) was denied by the SRVAPC for the following reasons:

1. The subject request does not conform to surrounding uses or parcel sizes.
2. The subject request does not reflect physical constraints on the property.
3. The subject request will individually and cumulatively have an adverse effect on surrounding agricultural uses and the efforts to protect those uses.
4. The subject request does not conform to the recommendations of the Tassajara Area study.

MS 247-77 was subsequently heard by the Board of Supervisors on appeal. The Board upheld the Commission's decision, denying the appeal, making the following findings:

- (a) That the proposed application is not consistent with the SRVAGP and
- (b) That the site is not physically suitable for the type and density of development proposed.

The adjoining 6 acre parcel to the south was created prior to the A-2 ordinance change in 1972 (applying the 5 acre minimum). Other lands adjoining the parcel are under agricultural preserve contract (1735-RZ - 132 acres, 1927-RZ - 106 acres, 1618-RZ - 712 acres)

The other A-2 parcels further north (14 parcels from 3 to 6½ acres) include several parcels created by 1977 minor subdivisions allowed as an infilling action in an area less constrained by slope. The initial parcelization of this area occurred prior to the zoning ordinance change which increased the A-2 minimum parcel size from one acre to 5 acres.

We continue to recommend an A-2 to A-40 rezoning for this parcel, based on the topographical characteristics of the parcel, the size of adjoining properties and the relatively remote nature of the parcel (removed from urban services). The pending minor subdivision proposal would further impact the surrounding agricultural lands with non-agricultural uses and set a precedent for similar requests which could have a serious cumulative adverse impact on neighboring agricultural properties and community as a result of residential needs.

SPEAKER #9: Dick Stregel, representing Planning Research Corp. (PRC) and Dr. J.J. Parker in the Rancho de Sol Project (2425-RZ) (AP# 204-050-023) (145+ acres) (A-2 existing; A-80 proposed).

COMMENTS:

- A. Mr. Stregel requests retention of A-2 zoning stating that the pending proposal on the parcel (2425-RZ) represents "A conceptual plan that fits very well with the topography and the parcel itself".
- B. The pending proposal (2425-RZ) would "be a good buffer between the Williamson Act or A-4 lands and the residential properties on Old School Road".

RESPONSES:

The parcel in question distinctly differs from the concentration of rural ranchette lots to the west (approximately one-eighth of the property boundary total parcel boundary abuts the area of existing ranchette development);

-The parcel is shown to be comprised of 30-50% slopes, even more constrained by slope than the eastern portions of the Flanagan property proposed for an A-2 to A-40 zoning change.

-The parcel is a remnant of a full 1/4 section and is surrounded on three sides by lands under agricultural contract (1401-RZ - 160 acres, 1303-RZ - a total of 1,150+ acres, 1670-RZ - three parcels totalling 180+ acres, and 1616-RZ - 145 acres).

If merit is seen in the "buffer" argument, we suggest that an A-40 designation should be considered. As previously mentioned, due to the presence of the pending rezoning application for this parcel, the Board has the option of dropping this parcel from consideration under 2218-RZ and hearing the matter on its own merits under the site-specific rezoning (2425-RZ).

SPEAKER #10: Paul Banke, representing Pete and Betty Banke and the W.P. Cattle Company (AP# 006-200-001) (520 acres) (A-4 existing; A-80 proposed).

COMMENTS:

Mr. Banke offered support of a Cattlemen's proposal stating the proposal would provide means to gaining liquidity out of the accumulated equity by allowing sale of portions of the property.

Mr. Banke stated that land divisions to 80 acre parcels as would be provided under A-80 designation, would be counter-productive to the goal of retaining the agricultural nature of the area. Also, the imposition of an 80 acre minimum parcel size would lead to pressures for variance and potentially promote speculative land purchases. He further stated that of the various plans and schemes to conserve agricultural land, the successful ones will "strengthen the position, the fiscal position, of the people in agriculture rather than destroy it as this particular plan (2218-RZ) would".

RESPONSES:

The previously prepared comments, dated 3/17/81, supplied by County Counsel to the Board provides an appropriate response to the above comments. To summarize the comments, County Counsel stated that the current zoning district provisions and procedures are available for use which would generally allow what the "Cattlemen's" proposal requests. The existing agricultural districts (A-20, A-40 and A-80) allow by variance permit procedures the clustering of single family dwellings (i.e., division of lands

into lots smaller than the respective 20, 40 and 80 acre minimum lots required by the districts).

Additionally, the County's P-1 Planned Unit District, would also allow the consideration and approval of rural-residential subdivision in a manner similar to that proposed by the "Cattlemen's" plan.

Both of the above would be available to existing A-2 lands proposed for A-20, A-40 or A-80 zoning changes.

As previously indicated, two-thirds of the entire 28,500+ acre study area is currently under Agricultural Preserve Contracts. It is the opinion of County Counsel that neither the "Cattlemen's" proposal or existing zoning district provisions (A-4) could be utilized to create any "saleable" residential lots for the duration of the applicable contract period (Contract period is 10 years except where a notice of non-renewal has been previously filed by the property owner).

It should also be noted at this point that the proposed application of Agricultural Districts (A-20, A-40 and A-80) is not without precedent. Many counties across the state have applied similar or even more restrictive plans. Actions of neighboring counties are summarized as follows:

San Luis Obispo County; 360 acre minimums for rangelands.

Alameda County; 100 acre minimum on 230,000 acres of range lands.

Solano County; 80 and 160 acre minimums on 230 square miles to safe guard crop and grazing lands.

Santa Clara County; 40 acre minimum on 175,000 acres of foothills and ridgeland.

Sonoma County; Agricultural Land Trusts have been established. 60 acre minimums.

Marin County; 60 acre minimums for rangelands.

SPEAKER #11: Lee Talbot (AP# 006-300-002) (107+ acres) (A-2 existing; A-80 proposed).

COMMENTS:

Mr. Talbot argues for a retention of a zoning district on his parcel that would facilitate a land division to four parcels on 107+ acres. (A recent request for same, MS 63-79, has been previously heard by the Board. At that time the Board denied the matter, on appeal, thus upholding the SRVAPC's action.

- A. Mr. Talbot states that the site's proximity to Livermore (6 miles) and State Highway 580 (4 miles) and the County line (1 mile) give merit to the consideration of retention of the A-2 zoning.
- B. Mr. Talbot sites his parcel's proximity to the Bankhead Ranch parcel, supported by the County Commission, which would provide 65 lots on 1,100+ acres.
- C. Mr. Talbot calls for "regional studies" suggesting that "the Board of Supervisors take the same time and effort to do an EIR on this "as he as an individual had to do on his property".

RESPONSES:

In terms of "proximity" it should be noted that the lands in Alameda County one mile from the subject parcel, are zoned for 100 acre minimum parcel sizes.

The "Bankhead Ranch" proposal was appealed and was considered by the Board at their hearing of April 28, 1981 at which time the proposed Subdivision was denied.

The Talbot parcel lies within the 1977 SRVAGP which indicates policies regarding open space and agriculture. The present proposal (2218-RZ) is seen as a tool to implement policy established by that Plan. The Vasco Road property is outside the SRVAGP. It's General Plan designation originates from the 1963 Land Use and Transportation Plan and by the County Open Space Element of 1973.

SPEAKER #12: Dan McNickle, representing the Daon Corp. (Agricultural Preserve Contract #22-76; 1936-RZ) (2,300 acres) (A-4 existing; A-80 proposed).

COMMENTS:

Mr. McNickle informed the Board of a "major study of the western third of this area" (11,000 acres of the 2218-RZ area). He further indicated an expectation to have in three or four months time "a significant amount of base information which could be provided to your Planning Department, to go into a special area plan for that area". Mr. McNickle stated an opinion that the Board may not have adequate information to make a decision.

RESPONSES:

The above mentioned property is the largest agricultural preserve contract property in the study area. The proposed zoning change (A-4 to A-80) reflects the parcel's current Agricultural Preserve Contract status and supports a consistent treatment of similarly situated and comparably sized contract lands. A zoning change to A-80 that implements policies laid out by the SRVAGP for this and other agricultural preserve contract is adequate reason not to consider removing this parcel from consideration under 2218-RZ.

SPEAKER #12: Fred Carlin (AP #206-020-058) (21+ acres) (A-2 existing; A-20 proposed).

COMMENTS:

- A. Mr. Carlin sees A-2 zoning as implying a vested right to parcel splits to the five acre minimum.
- B. Mr. Carlin cited the parcel's proximity to development (Blackhawk and the Sycamore Special Plan) and the anticipated availability of sewer and water services as warranting retention of the A-2 designation on his parcel.
- C. Mr. Carlin compared his pending application's impact (MS 102-79; 4 lots on 21+ acres) to Flanagan's project (Tract 5736; 28 lots on 320+ acres).
- D. Mr. Carlin stated his understanding that Stage III Area may be taken out of study area.

RESPONSES:

- A. Lot size requirements are minimums. No zoning district's minimum can be taken as establishing vested rights to divide land down to the minimum. When reviewing the merits of a land division proposal consideration of all factors (e.g., availability of services, physical constraints to development, aesthetic impacts of development, impact on surrounding lands, etc.) must be taken into account. Minimums established within zoning districts are further controlled by general plan considerations.
- B. It will take a large scale development to extend water and sewer services to these "outlying areas" even though they are relatively close to both Blackhawk and the Sycamore Valley Special Plan Area.
- C. Mr. Carlin's property is physically comparable to the hilly areas of Flanagan's subdivision (Tract 5736) which is proposed for an A-2 to A-40 zoning change. The division of the flat portions of Flanagan's property into five acre parcels was done as an "infilling" action within a concentration of ranchette-sized lots. A division of Mr. Carlin's property into five acre lots would allow the creation of lots of that size in that particular area for the first time.
- D. Stage III is at the early planning stage only. Application of the new agricultural districts as proposed by 2218-RZ is to implement the policies of the existing General Plan. Action on a Stage III proposal would require some level of General Plan review of the area involved. Rezoning lands within the area in question does not preclude this subsequent general plan review and will serve to limit land divisions in the area which would compromise and prejudice the implementation of any area plan.

SPEAKER #13: Joe Cooney, Director of Cooperative Extension for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

COMMENTS:

In speaking to the purpose of the proposed rezoning, Mr. Cooney states..."if your real issue is to protect and preserve agriculture....the agricultural interests in the area of those that are trying to be saved, should certainly have an input and be listened to and heeded as they make their statements". Mr. Cooney states that the "equity and justice" of the proposed rezoning must be reviewed.

RESPONSES:

The provision for "clustering" of units that exists by way of a variance process within the A-20, A-40 and A-80 zoning districts can serve as a means to allow the liquifying of assets (land) to historic property owners in the area.

SPEAKER #: Art Reinstein, Rancher (AP #066-180-002 and 001; 206-030,010 and 003) (1,120 acres) (A-4 existing; A-80 proposed).

COMMENTS:

Mr. Reinstein sees the current proposal (2218-RZ) as coming too late to provide any substantial benefit in the attempts to preserve agriculture in the Tassajara area. Production capacity remains static while more restrictions (e.g. restriction on aerial spraying), higher production costs, encroachment of ranchette development, costs for machinery all act against continuing agricultural production.

Mr. Reinstein sees the zoning proposal as a further hindrance as it will impact the financial vitality of on-going ranching operations.

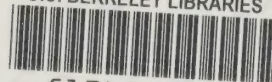
RESPONSES:

The bulk of ranchette-sized parcels have been established in the last 11 years (140 of 172 new parcels established in this period were under 10 acres). It should be noted that although the number of parcels represents approximately 50% of the total number of parcels in the study area, they account for only 3%-4% of the total land area. The bulk of the study area is under, or available for, agricultural production (grazing).

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